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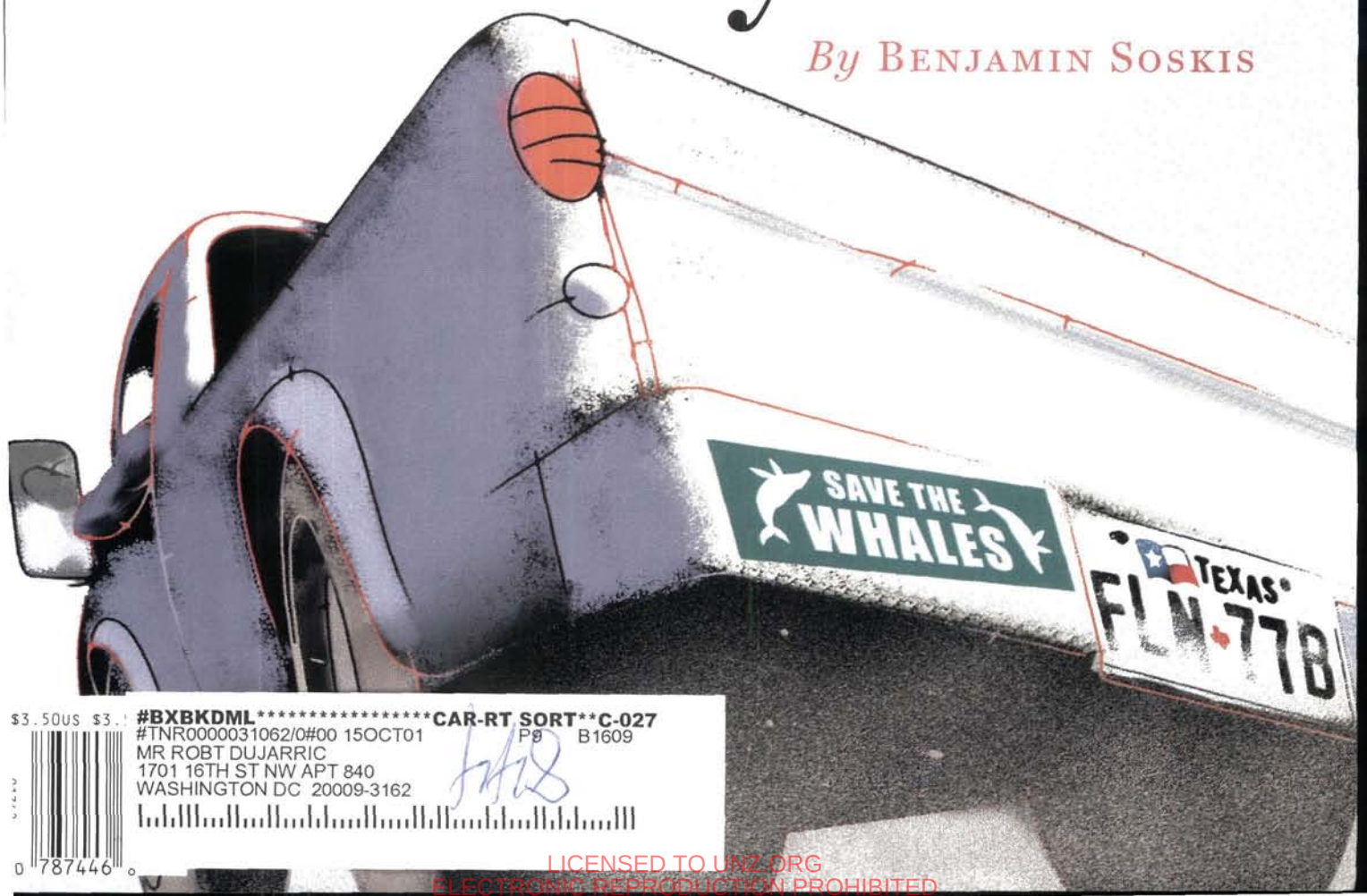
Dick Cheney, Beyond Belief
MICHELLE COTTLE

SEPTEMBER 18, 2000

Why Texas Isn't Texas Anymore

By BENJAMIN SOSKIS



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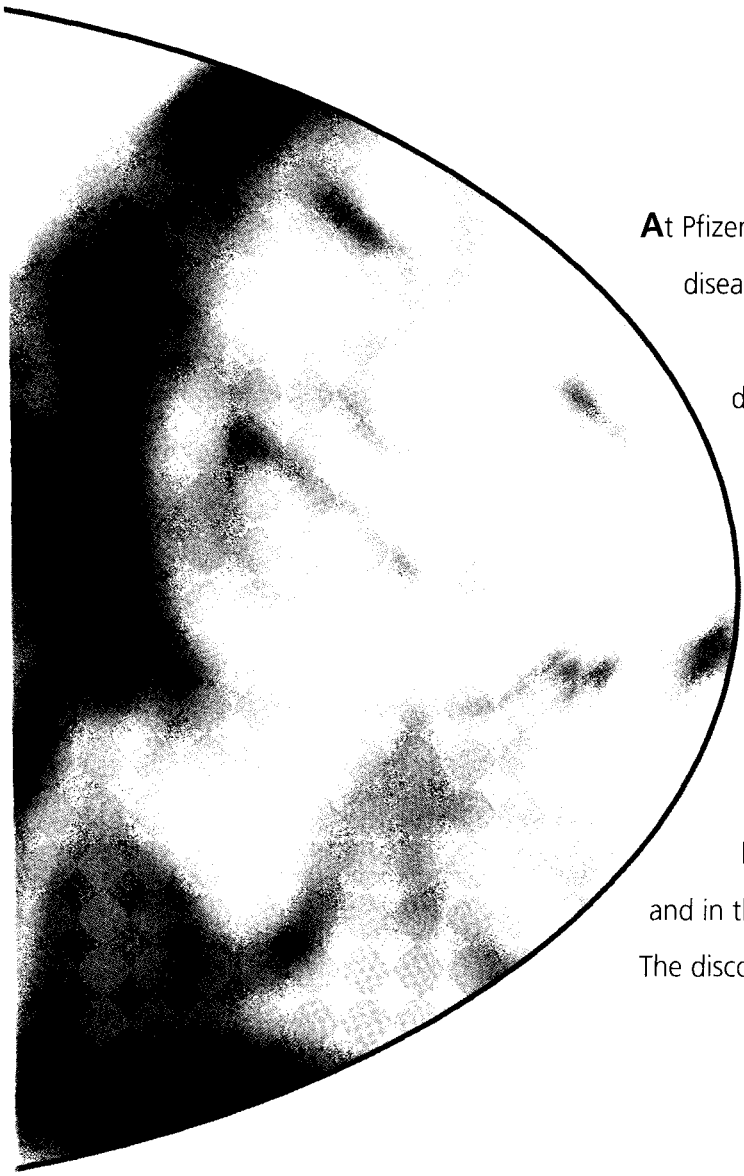

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Republican caucus

To the editors:

I write to express my appreciation for Lawrence F. Kaplan's timely and incisive article on Dick Cheney's strong ties to the former local KGB head turned dictator of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and a corrupt Russian oil company with access to hundreds of millions of our tax dollars ("From Russia With Loans," August 7). If Cheney becomes vice president, the links Kaplan exposes are very likely to seriously influence his foreign policy. At this crucial and complex time in our evolving relationship with Russia and the other former Soviet republics, we need decision-making that is careful, rational, and objective, not driven by the agendas of hidden special interests.

I am also glad that Kaplan brought up the Azeri government's twelve-year campaign of terror, massacre, and deportation against Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, a region in Azerbaijan. The Armenians have suffered tremendously this century, particularly in the 1915–1923 genocide by the Turkish government, in which more than one million Armenians died. Now Turkey and Azerbaijan have joined together in a blockade to prevent shipments of food, medicine, and fuel into not only Nagorno-Karabakh but also the Armenian Republic. Cheney, who apparently values Azeri oil more than Armenian lives, has made every effort to undercut Congress's law requiring an end to the blockade. I applaud Kaplan for making clear that such a position is most definitely not in our national interest.

Henry C. Theriault, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
Worcester State College
Worcester, Massachusetts

To the editors:

I was unpleasantly surprised by incorrect and inappropriate statements regarding Azerbaijan in "From Russia With Loans." During my seven years in Washington, I have often seen my country treated unfairly by the U.S. media, with U.S.-Azerbaijan relations falling victim to U.S. domestic politics. Unfortunately, Lawrence F. Kaplan used the pages of your respectable publication to level unfounded allegations against Azerbaijan.

Kaplan accuses Azerbaijan of "vicious war" and "ethnic cleansing." But it is Armenia that committed aggression against Azerbaijan. The United Nations, OSCE, and the U.S. government recognize the fact that Armenian armed forces have since 1992–1994 occupied 20 percent of

The Supreme Court's Trail of Tears STEPHEN BREYER
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Dick Cheney's Risky Business
Yasir Arafat's Rejection of Palestine
IT'S STILL HIS PARTY
Jonathan Chait on the GOP's nostalgia problem

Azerbaijan, creating approximately one million refugees and internally displaced persons. Some 190,000 ethnic Azerbaijanis were forcibly evicted from Armenia and some 60,000 from Nagorno-Karabakh. The international community has repeatedly called for the withdrawal of Armenian forces from Azerbaijan.

Contrary to Kaplan's allegations, the current president of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev, assumed office in accordance with the constitution and has worked diligently to preserve the country's independence. Not only did he preside over the signing of the cease-fire agreement with Armenia in 1994, he also led Azerbaijan's efforts to establish lasting peace in the region. Azerbaijan today is the most stable country in the region.

Kaplan's statements are not only inaccurate and misleading but also simply illogical. Attacking Aliyev, he names events of 1993 as the reasons for enacting the Armenian-lobby-sponsored sanctions against Azerbaijan, Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act. Yet the sanctions were passed in 1992, before Aliyev became Azerbaijan's president.

Hafiz Pashayev
Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Washington, D.C.

Lawrence F. Kaplan replies:

Hafiz Pashayev's defense of the dictatorship he represents is understandable. It is also absurd. Azerbaijan's campaign of terror against its Armenian population and its aggression against the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, have been well-publicized by, among others, the same U.S. government the ambassador cites. That is why Congress enacted sanctions against Azerbaijan. I also stated clearly that Congress enacted the sanctions in 1992, before Aliyev seized power in a military coup, which, though it may have made Azerbaijan "the most stable country in the region," also made it one of the most repressive countries in the world.

Faith-based

To the editors:

I like Andrew Sullivan's jaunty writing style, but in "Armies of Confusion" (August 7) he argued that my "barely disguised ambition" is to have the government establish religion. He's right to say that I would like welfare ideally to be handled by religious and community groups, but the mix of those two might be 10 percent to 90 percent or 90 percent to 10 percent; it all depends on effectiveness in producing results generally agreed to be beneficial, such as moving people out of drug addiction and into jobs. It would be bad for the country and for religious organizations if either the groups in general or any religious group in particular received preference because of religion. I'm a senior fellow of the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty, and I take that name seriously: we should strive for measures that will not set the two parts of the object of study, religion and liberty, against each other.

Marvin Olasky
Austin, Texas

FAIRwell

To the editors:

In giving the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) an opportunity to respond to John B. Judis's article on H-1B visas ("Temporary Help," June 19), The New Republic also gave Judis a rebuttal that allowed him to advance shopworn attacks on two FAIR supporters, attacks that ought to have no place in American politics (Correspondence, July 31).

Our letter underwent extensive fact-checking. Yet we find Judis making allegations that can only be described as fabrications—just restatements of other third-party attacks. Moreover, Judis claims that because a fund that supported FAIR (providing about one-fiftieth of FAIR's funding to date) is alleged to have at one time supported research into the relationship between genes and intelligence, FAIR is consumed by race issues. Given that 95 percent of that foundation's funding has gone to distinguished universities, Judis sounds like a fool. Judis's allegations about that foundation's alleged political views cannot be proved by any firsthand sources, nor can it be proved that FAIR was

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influenced by those alleged views. Nor does it really meet the argument that the H-1B jobs issue has nothing to do with race, ethnicity, intelligence, or anything of that sort—which was my original point.

Judis's claim that John Tanton, a FAIR founder, is consumed by race because of an out-of-context remark by Tanton regarding future Hispanic population growth is laughable, given the racist orientation of organizations like the National Council of La Raza. La Raza of late has routinely made statements about the political threat of the rising "Hispanic sleeping giant," whose new political clout, it claims, is derived from ever-rising numbers. This alone, says La Raza, makes Hispanics a determining force in American politics. That makes Tanton's decades-old remark sound mild, no? Apparently, because La Raza tries to make a claim to representing so-called nonwhites, its thinly veiled racism escapes the censure of people like Judis.

All this has nothing to do with H-1B workers or Senator Spencer Abraham's destructive role in working to undermine what little remains of America's immigration controls. Even Judis would have to admit that illegal immigration is completely out of legal and democratic control. FAIR has far-reaching expertise in the importance of land border-crossing issues, yet Judis dismisses our concern as nothing but a smoke screen for a concern about Abraham's ethnic background. Judis is like so many other Washington know-it-alls who claim expertise in thousands of subjects while being masters of none.

DAN STEIN
Executive Director
Federation for
American Immigration Reform
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITORS:

In an effort to defend himself against criticisms by Norman S. Matloff of the University of California and Dan Stein of FAIR, John B. Judis tries to discredit FAIR by falsely characterizing the Pioneer Fund, which has made grants to FAIR for work in demographics. Contrary to Judis's claim, Pioneer has never "promoted racial purity and eugenics." We have confined ourselves strictly to making grants to research institutions, mainly universities, for work on projects suggested by them in the areas of intelligence, behavioral genetics, racial differences, and demographics. To date our grants have gone to about 60 institutions in eight countries, and the list of scientists working on projects funded by us reads like a who's who of award-winning scientists. The use of the research is left entirely up to the universities and the scientists. Pioneer does not publish a newsletter, issue statements, or otherwise "promote" anything.

HARRY F. WEYHER
President
Pioneer Fund
New York, New York

JOHN B. JUDIS REPLIES:

Are these really rebuttals or feeble attempts to publicize two disreputable organizations? I never wrote that FAIR founder John Tanton was "consumed by race," but I quoted accurately his fears about a "Hispanic population explosion" and "whites [seeing] their power and control over their lives decline." I didn't quote Tanton out of context; he expressed the same fear a number of times—for instance, in a memo that led to his resignation as chairman of the organization U.S. English. I did not dismiss FAIR's concern about H-1B workers. I criticized the organization for attempting to discredit Senator Spencer Abraham's views on immigration by impugning his ethnic heritage. In a full-page ad that was also used as a fund-raising letter, FAIR displayed Abraham's picture next to Osama bin Laden's and used the text and headline to draw a connection between Abraham's proposal and two other Arab terrorists. What was the issue? Abraham wanted to remove a provision in the 1996 Immigration Act that imposed onerous checks on border visitors. Abraham was not acting on behalf of Arab terrorists, as the ad implied, but on behalf of local businesses along the border with Canada and Mexico that were worried about the tourist trade.

As for the Pioneer Fund, I stand by my characterization of its purposes. Yes, it has given money to distinguished universities—but to promote eugenics, as it states on its own website. For instance, it funded Stanford Professor William B. Shockley, who has maintained that whites are inherently more intelligent than blacks. It provided similar funds for the University of California's Arthur Jensen and Western Ontario University's notorious Phillipe Rushton, known for his comparative research into the sexual organs, cranium sizes, and IQs of blacks, Asians, and whites. Its founding document declares its commitment to "race betterment" and to aiding the descendants of "white persons who settled in the original 13 colonies." ■

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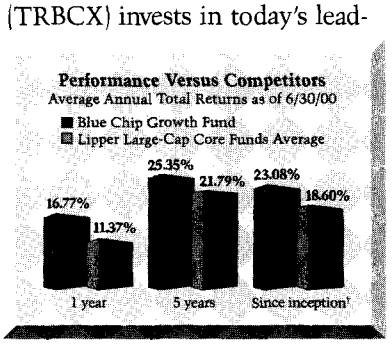

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Left Behind

EVER SINCE THE presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, the United States has undergone a new burst of social progress about every 30 years—so goes the grand old historical thesis of Arthur M. Schlesinger senior. Progress bloomed under Roosevelt in 1901, under FDR in 1933, and under JFK in 1961. Then another 30 years passed, and Bill Clinton came to power. Liberals and even a few radicals earnestly hoped that, once again, an age of social progress was about to burst into leafy blossom, perhaps in fertile contact with the livelier intellectuals. And the liberals and radicals eagerly looked for signs of the progress to come.

Or what they thought were signs. The problem, I think, is that Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal has blinded some of us on the left: having gazed upon too many dazzlements from the 1930s, we can no longer reliably distinguish a giant New Deal office building from genuine social improvement. So we liberals and radicals searched the Clinton administration for vast new programs to applaud. But nothing loomed into view. Even Clinton's health care bill, huge as it was, proved more of a market regulation than a giant new agency. And quite a few good-souled liberals and radicals, failing to see any connection between their Rooseveltian expectations and the Clintonian reality, began to feel not just disappointed by the new president but actively deceived.

By a strange coincidence, Clinton's more conservative supporters responded to the man in much the same way. Clinton's campaign rhetoric, in its slickness, had led those people to expect a Democratic version of Reagan-style conservatism. But Clinton was plainly not a conservative. Instead, he turned out to be ... no one knew what. And so, on the right as on the left, a worry arose that national power had fallen into the hands of a crafty political operator whose principles could not be identified and who therefore might have no principles at all. A scoundrel! The worry took on a shimmer of sexual revulsion. And by 1998 a genuine panic swept the political class—a hysteria that produced a graver crisis than anything since the days of Richard Nixon, who really was, according to recent accounts, slightly mad.

Looking back, though, it should have been obvious all along that Clinton did, in fact, adhere to a simple enough set of principles. He attached the social goals of traditional liberalism to the market methods of traditional conservatism. At home, he was pro-business, pro-labor, and pro-civil rights. Abroad, he was pro-free trade and pro-human rights. It was an impossible combination, logically speaking. It was an ideological scandal. It was the scandal that underlay *the* scandal. But such was his approach. And by now we can judge the results.

Anyone can ferret out a few vivid statistics to demonstrate that America's ancient social ills are always getting worse—ills that might be summed up by observing that America's prisons contain far too many young black men and not nearly enough elderly white CEOs. After eight years of Clinton, those are definitely the negatives. They are undeniable. Yet, if you also tally up the rise in employment; the rise in workers' wages (after 30 years of decline), especially black workers' wages; the rise in union membership (also after a long decline); the rise of the black middle class; the rise in racial tolerance; the rise in home ownership, car ownership, and stock ownership; and the rise, not least, in your chances of getting home at night without being mugged, you arrive at a remarkable total. And its meaning is this: We are living in an age of social progress. The Schlesinger thesis still holds.

The balance sheet in foreign affairs is a little less clear. Clinton's principle of cobbling together opposites led him to attach a dovish timidity to a hawkish human rights idealism, which was not always a good thing (though sometimes it was—e.g., the passive-aggressive way he invaded Haiti, where no one got killed). Still, a few years ago it was all the rage to predict a world dominated by cynical great-power rivalries: Europe in one corner, Japan in another, America in a third, and so forth, mutually snarling. Instead, a world has arisen in which, at least for the moment, the rhetoric of human rights and democratic solidarity has become just as globalized as everything else. And sometimes the rhetoric is more than rhetoric.

For some reason, though, no one has produced a simple, systematic, popular account of Clinton's general approach to public policy. No one has even coined a phrase to describe the main operating principle, apart from "Third Way," whose only meaning is "not this and not that." The fertile contact with the livelier intellectuals somehow ended up being less than fertile. And, in the absence of any systematic explanation, quite a few people who dwell in the world of ideology have not been able to notice any social progress at all. They look and do not see. Or else they do notice one aspect or another but cannot detect the guiding hand of government.

The blindness comes in right-wing and left-wing versions, and the left-wing version strikes me as especially poignant right now. That's because the stout-hearted 3 percent of America's voters who have thus far stuck with Ralph Nader may well hold the election in their hands. Those people secretly worry, I'm convinced, that today's Democratic Party is not, in fact, Tweedledum and that supporting Nader may be a big mistake. They have surely noticed that hardly any of their fellow Naderites are black, which must give them pause.

But the Naderites comfort themselves with the notion that Al Gore will win anyway and that a Green Party vote will push him to the left. And here is where they make their biggest error of all. For how did Clinton and his administration come by their achievements? By the skin of their teeth. Clinton never won 50 percent of the popular vote and was always politically vulnerable because of it, which is part of the reason the Republicans staged their sort-of-a-coup. Had he won even a bit more popular support in 1992, some 40 million Americans might have health insurance right now.

In most of the polls, Gore's support has likewise failed to surpass 50 percent. The Nader voters could push him over the line tomorrow, if they wanted to. They could give him a nice little left-wing boost, and, with momentum on his side, Gore could end up winning the kind of power that Clinton has never had—the legitimating power of a popular majority, the power to make the current set of achievements seem mere preliminaries to even grander possibilities.

But I am dreaming. For no one has adequately described the social progress that has already come about, and the Naderites will persist in regarding that progress as a noxious myth. And, in their indignation, they won't give a damn about boosts, momentum, and majorities.

PAUL BERMAN

PAUL BERMAN is author of *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968*.

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Where We Stand

A commentary on public education and other critical issues

Good For America

By SANDRA FELDMAN, President
American Federation of Teachers

What better time is there than Labor Day to talk about what's wrong with knee-jerk antiunionism—the kind that was on display in a recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial (July 31, 2000).

Having congratulated George W. Bush on Texas's education record, the *Journal* went on to take a whack at teacher unions: According to the editorial writer, nothing like the Texas reform could ever happen in a state where teacher unions are influential. Of course attributing this "miracle" solely to Governor Bush is a bit much to begin with. Anyone who has followed the progress of education reform in Texas knows that the reform measures bearing fruit today—higher standards, accountability, and testing—were put in place under two Democratic governors beginning in 1984. They probably also know that the Texas Federation of Teachers and strong AFT locals in major Texas cities (yes, there are unions in Texas) have backed these reforms since at least 1983. The union is also responsible for fighting for smaller class size, and it introduced the reading and anti social-promotion initiatives that Governor Bush has now adopted as his own.

Ignoring the Facts

Texas aside, the *Journal*'s easy assumption that unions stand in the way of quality in any area in which they work just doesn't stand up to scrutiny. If it were true, the nation's best schools would be in states where there is no collective bargaining and where unions have less clout (states like Alabama and Mississippi) instead of in states (like New York and Connecticut) where unions are active and well established. And if it were true, we certainly would not see some of the world's best school systems in Scandinavia and in countries like France and Germany, where the union movement is as strong or stronger than it is here.

In fact, professionals are turning more and more to unions in large part *because* they care about the quality of service their clients get. As a result of changes in the health-care industry, health professionals often feel powerless to ensure that their patients get good quality care. That's why many of them—nurses, doctors, and even psychologists—are joining unions. They want a voice in maintaining the standards of their professions.

Of course, in giving members voice, as well as trying to get them decent working conditions and reasonable wages, unions sometimes ruffle feathers. That can happen when we stand up for our members in a disagreement with management. But, like it or not, this freedom to speak out with a united voice is one of the foundations of our democratic system. It's called freedom of association, and it's the reason totalitarian regimes always target unions for destruction, along with religious institutions, the media, and groups that are "different."

Labor unions are a positive force in education and many other fields.

You don't have to be a dictator to want things to run smoothly. So it's not surprising when management is less than enthusiastic about a union's exercising its right to dissent—when members refuse to go along and, when all else fails, even walk off the job.

But people should pay attention when workers raise their voices—even when a union takes an unpopular position. It could be that a new way of doing things is simply not working. It could be that people on the job have some worthwhile criticisms that should be taken into account. It could be, for example, that teachers are right when they say that merit pay is likely to discourage collegiality and teamwork. And it could be that when teacher unions say we are not going to get the top people we need in the profession until we pay for them, they're telling the truth.

Providing Balance

I'd be the last to insist that unions never make mistakes. But so does management—that's why we need the balance unions provide. In a democratic system, where voice is respected—and both sides act responsibly—everyone benefits.

This is certainly true in schools. Teacher unions may have their differences with school districts, but they also provide important support, and often leadership, for the higher standards and accountability that are improving our schools across the nation.

Can people who suffer from knee-jerk reactions to labor unions—or any other group or idea—be cured? Of course. They just have to look at the whole story. And that's not a bad project for Labor Day. ▮

***Where We Stand* is published once every month in *The New Republic*. To comment, write to Sandra Feldman, AFT, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001.** **© Sandra Feldman 2000.** **Visit our web site (http://www.aft.org).**

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Care Free

IT TOOK GEORGE W. BUSH 450 days of official campaigning to devise a plan for providing retirees with prescription-drug coverage. So last Tuesday, when he finally unveiled his proposal, the Texas governor tried to make up for the delay with sheer ambition. Rather than just tether a prescription-drug benefit to Medicare, as Al Gore has proposed, Bush said he would "seize the moment to modernize Medicare." At the same time as he pumped it with more money, he would transform Medicare from a government-run social-insurance program into a network of competing private and public insurance providers. By introducing competition, Bush promised, he would "increase not just funding but choices, and quality, and security."

Under Bush's proposal, seniors would decide whether to stay in the traditional Medicare plan or enroll in a private one; in either case, they could decide whether to get prescription-drug coverage. Presumably, they would comparison shop among plans, based on price and their health care needs. People who wanted more benefits and options could choose more elaborate plans, albeit for a premium. Hence, Bush's plan increases choice.

Or does it? One of the best things about Medicare, in its current form, is that it still allows patients to see any doctor they want and get pretty much any treatment the doctor thinks they need. Unlike most managed care plans, there is no list of preferred or selected providers. And, while Medicare has been slow to cover new treatments, for the most part there is no pre-certification review—that is, no HMO administrator whom the doctor must first call to get approval of a treatment. If it's on Medicare's list of approved treatments (and, notwithstanding the occasional horror story, most procedures are), it's covered. When people talk about "choice" in health care, this is usually what they mean—choice of doctors and treatments. Under Medicare today, retirees have it. Under Bush's proposal, those opting for private plans probably wouldn't have it.

Of course, Bush says he wouldn't force anybody into restrictive, HMO-style plans; it would all be up to the individual consumer. But here is where the particular economics of health care comes into play. The people most likely to opt for restrictive plans are those least likely to get sick. If Bush's plan worked as he claims, over time enrollment in the traditional Medicare insurance program would dwindle to the least healthy retirees, thus driving up the cost (either in higher premiums or deductibles) for each person still in it. Eventually, it would become too expensive for most of them to afford, and they would be forced into cheaper HMOs that don't offer the treatments they need. So much for choice. (Without explicitly committing himself, Bush has implied that he supports regulations to prevent this sort of thing from happening. But such regulations make it a lot less profitable to cover the elderly, and so most HMOs probably wouldn't participate; in that case, instead of damaging Medicare, Bush's plan would have virtually no effect at all.)

While Bush doesn't acknowledge that offering a choice of insurance companies might ultimately limit consumers' choice of doctors or treatments, most honest proponents of the approach do. And, while they admit it's regrettable, they say it's a form of rationing necessary to restrain the overall cost of medical care for the elderly and keep the Medicare bureaucracy from getting too wasteful. But even that is bogus, because the bureaucracy that runs Medicare, the Health Care Financing Administration, is actually terrifically efficient. In the traditional Medicare plan, administrative costs eat up just 2 to 3 percent of total cost. In private plans, which spend money on advertising and stockholder dividends, administrative costs average 15 percent. Yes, HCFA is sometimes slow to approve new treatments. But so are private plans—and they're often more arbitrary about it. And, while health care costs in private insurance plans have shot up in recent years (and could cause premiums to increase as much as 30 percent next year), Medicare has largely held inflation in check, thanks in no small part to HCFA's aggressive rooting out of corruption and fraud.

None of this means Medicare is without problems. The Medicare system really is facing a long-term solvency crisis. But, as with Social Security, Medicare's design doesn't have much to do with it. The primary reason Medicare will become insolvent sometime after 2020 is that people are living longer and technology has come up with better, but more expensive, ways to treat illness. In the long run, fixing Medicare's finances is going to require some combination of putting more money into it and sending less money out. Gore has basically said he'll do the former—which would ease the problem in the short term and which he can afford, because he proposes a smaller tax cut. After 450 days and his much-hyped health care speech, Bush still hasn't answered. ■

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NOTEBOOK

SEND HIM HOME: In an opinion unsealed this week, Judge James A. Parker of the federal district court in Albuquerque, New Mexico, said he was no longer convinced that the computer files downloaded by Wen Ho Lee were in fact the "crown jewels" of the U.S. nuclear weapons program, as the government had claimed. Last week, Parker concluded that the government's case against Lee "no longer has the requisite clarity and persuasive character" to keep the former Los Alamos scientist in shackles and ordered him released on bail before his trial in November. (At the last minute, Lee's release was stayed by an appellate court at the government's request.) We have long been concerned by the government's conduct toward Lee—at every turn, when their strongest allegations turn out to be unsupported by the facts, prosecutors have tried to save face rather than reconsider their decision to prosecute. Lee was originally investigated for passing nuclear secrets to the Chinese government, but when these suspicions proved unjustified, the government indicted him instead for illegally downloading the secrets. A government witness testified that Lee lied to a colleague to gain access to a computer and neglected to disclose a meeting with Chinese scientists, but the witness later abandoned these allegations. When Parker proposed releasing Lee on bail, the government demanded that his wife be prohibited from communicating with third parties, a condition Parker rejected out of hand. And then, instead of owning up to its errors and exaggerations, the government asked an appellate court to stay Lee's release. We can't reach a final judgment about the merits of the remaining charges until more of the testimony has been made public. But, given that the government's most serious allegations seem to be evaporating, it's hard to fathom why Lee shouldn't at least be allowed to spend the days before the trial with his family, at home.

TOO CLOSE TO CALL?: While Al Gore has enjoyed a substantial bounce in the national polls—rising from as much as 16 points down in surveys right before the Democratic convention to as many as ten points up in polls since—political junkies have been unimpressed. "The bottom line in all of this is ... forget about the national polls," Wolf Blitzer told CNN viewers on September 1. The way Blitzer sees it, because the election is decided by the electoral college, the polls that matter are at the state level, and, as Blitzer declared, "as far as the states are concerned, this is way too close to call right now." Indeed, according to the state-by-state electoral college analyses of several news organizations—including ABC, *The Washington Times*, and the Baltimore *Sun*—Gore actually trailed Bush as of Labor Day weekend. On September 5, *The Hotline*'s "electoral scoreboard," a widely cited survey regularly reprinted in *The New York Times*, gave Bush 234 electoral votes—a mere 36 shy of the 270 necessary to win. There's only one problem with these analyses: Many of the state polls on which they're based are ridiculously out of date. Take *The Hotline*'s day-after-Labor Day scoreboard, which included 18 state polls taken before the Democratic convention—i.e., before Gore's surge. Unsurprisingly, Bush led in 17 of these, including battleground states such as Arkansas, Delaware, Kentucky, and Wisconsin. Missouri provided a typical case: Bush was listed as up by eleven points on the basis of a poll completed July 10—when his national lead was as much as eight points. You might guess that more recent polling would move Missouri into the toss-up category or even the Gore column. And you would be right: a state poll released on September 6 showed Gore up by four. (*The Hotline* promptly updated its map.) Of course, arithmetic logic strongly implies that Missouri is not an isolated case (after all, Gore has gained all that national support from *somewhere*). Indeed, internal Gore campaign polls suggest that four states—Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, and Wisconsin—that *The Hotline* continues to award to Bush on the basis of pre-convention polls are now toss-ups. It seems some people can't find their way even with a map.

SENATORIAL PRIVILEGES: Poor Adam Clymer. One day the *New York Times* reporter is just another pencil covering the Bush campaign; the next—after Bush, in an overheard aside to Dick Cheney, called him a "major-league asshole"—he's the poster boy for liberal-media bias. But while conservatives pile on, subjecting all of Clymer's campaign stories to comically close textual readings, they're overlooking his real journalistic sin. Throughout much of the 1990s, at the same time that Clymer was writing what would turn out to be a fawning biography of Ted Kennedy—with Kennedy's full cooperation—he was also covering Kennedy for the *Times*. The result was some pretty over-the-top praise for the Massachusetts senator in the Gray Lady's news pages. Consider this doozy from 1996: "Probably not since Senator Everett Dirksen and Representative William McCulloch provided a critical balance in getting civil rights bills passed in the 1960s," Clymer wrote, "has any member of the Congressional minority influenced the agenda as much as Edward M. Kennedy has this year." Seems the problem with Bush's outburst isn't just that it was indelicately phrased but that it came several years too late.

FEAR AND SELF-LOATHING ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL: Quibbles about Clymer aside, the media's response to Bush's remark has revealed an interesting streak of self-loathing. Some reporters have actually suggested that Bush, by going after a member of the press, probably helped himself with voters. Roger Simon of *U.S. News & World Report* argued that "calling a reporter an [asshole] could never lose you votes in America, and might gain you some." *Fortune* magazine's Jeff Birnbaum proclaimed the statement "a winner" because it helped Bush "show some spine." And according to Mickey Kaus, proprietor of the invaluable website kausfiles.com, "to the extent it has any effect, Bush's overheard comment will help him." The reason? "Finally a genuine emotion, expressed with Trumanesque vigor!" Well, not quite. Bush didn't exactly walk up to Clymer and give him a dose of the Trumanesque "plain talk" he champions on the stump. He delivered the comment under his breath to sidekick Dick

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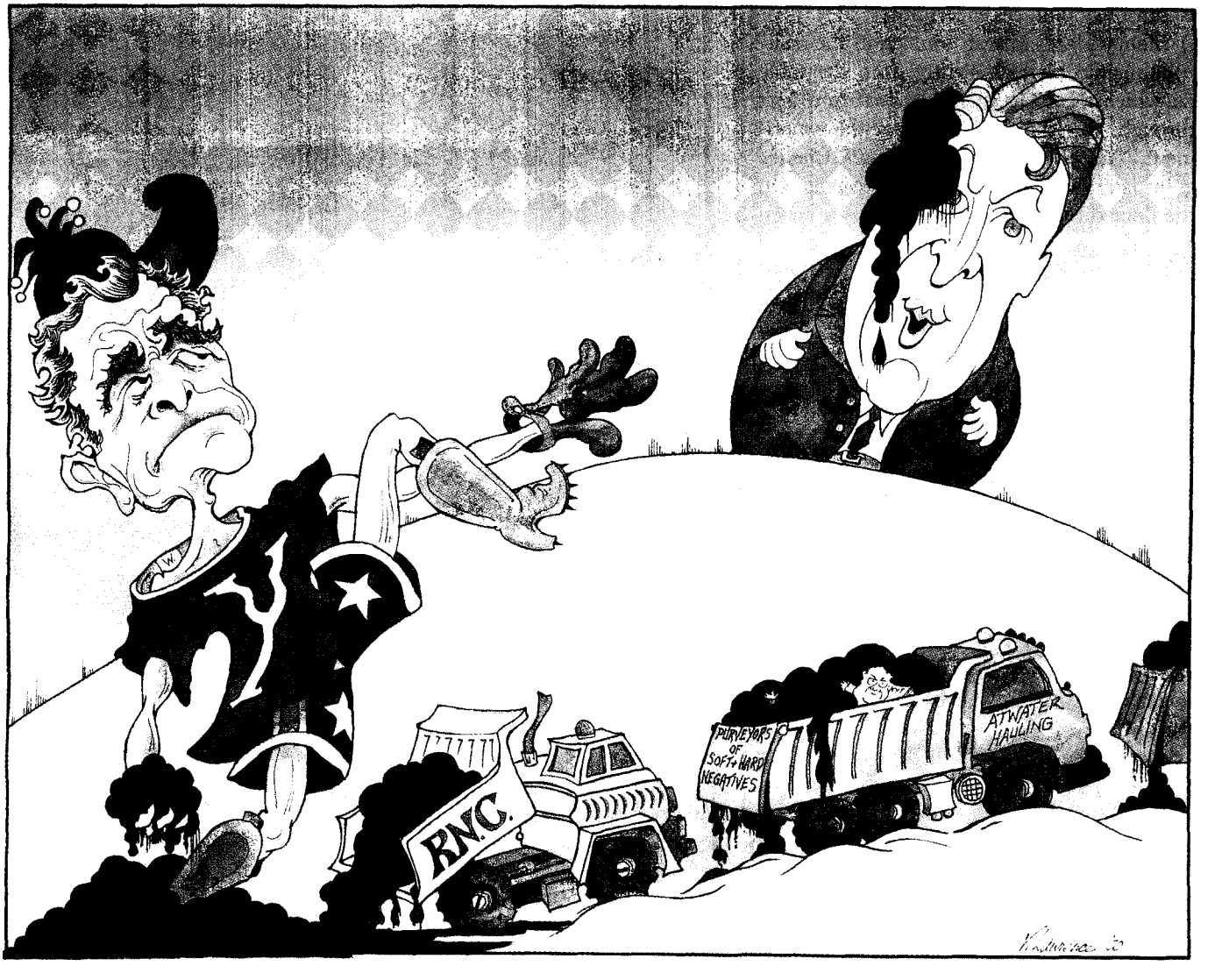
Cheney. Had it not been for a nearby microphone, the only person to hear Bush's true sentiments would have been a man guaranteed to agree with him. In fact, the Texas governor wasn't even bold in contrition. Instead of regretting that he didn't insult Clymer openly, Bush regretted having been overheard. Evidently, he's not quite as confident that America hates the media as are the denizens of the Fourth Estate themselves.

WHY TAKE CHANCES?: The Bush campaign has long claimed it's not worried about Pat Buchanan siphoning off conservative votes. And its confidence will be put to the test this November, since Buchanan will show up on most state ballots as the Reform Party nominee, despite Reform rival John Hagelin's best efforts. But in two critical swing states, it seems, the Bushies probably won't have much to fear. Michigan Secretary of State Candice Miller has denied Buchanan (as well as Hagelin) a ballot spot, citing confusion about who really won the Reform nomination. Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris plans to nix both men for the same reason. Says Buchanan spokesman K.B. Forbes, "These are the only states that have arbitrarily pulled us off because the secretary of state felt that way, without saying they're going to have hearings or wait for the Federal Elections Commission to rule." Surely the rulings (which Buchanan is challenging) were not influenced by Miller's status as the Bush campaign's Michigan co-chair or by Harris's January trip to New Hampshire, where she joined Florida Governor Jeb Bush in some door-to-door campaigning for his brother.

BUT WHO'S COUNTING?: In a press release touting its budget plan last week, the Bush campaign boasts: "On the following page is a chart of Governor Bush's budget that clearly shows how he will keep the balanced budget, meet his spending priorities, and deliver tax relief to American families." Actually, what the chart clearly shows is that the Bushies can't do basic arithmetic. In adding up the dollar amounts of eleven spending categories—Medicare, defense, education, and so on—the campaign reaches a total of $474.6 billion. The correct total is $474.7 billion. ■

VINT'S WEEK



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Campaign Journal

Stumped

By MICHELLE COTTLE

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

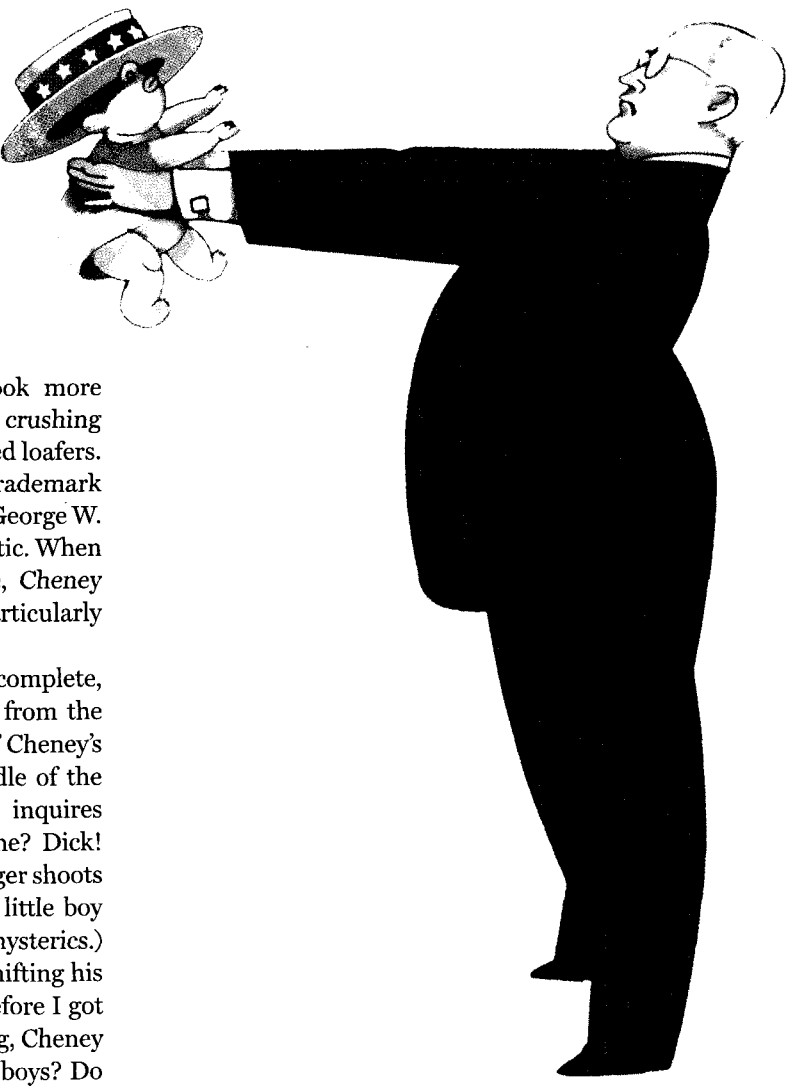
DICK CHENEY IS eyeing Rosalyn Robinson as though she had just asked him to dance the Hokey Pokey. Naked. For her part, Robinson, a pre-first-grade teacher at Croissant Park Elementary School in Fort Lauderdale, is beaming. Rather than have the visiting candidate just talk to her class, Robinson has set up a science project for him to participate in: determining which simple solution—water mixed with cornstarch, with food coloring, with vinegar, or with salt—will float an egg. Before Cheney's arrival, each child took a guess, placing a paper egg—decorated with eyes, lips, arms, and swim trunks—on a chart under the category of his or her choice. Most of the class chose cornstarch. Now it's the candidate's turn. "We want Mr. Cheney to do his [egg] to see how smart he is—to be vice president," Robinson announces cheerfully.

Cheney places his cartoon egg in the "salt" column and retreats swiftly from the table on which the chart sits. But Robinson isn't through. Out come real eggs for the experiment. "You want *me* to do this?" Cheney gulps, shuffling back toward the teacher. On the floor directly in front of him sit a dozen small children, craning their necks to see the hulking candidate. Plop goes egg number one into the water and cornstarch. Plop. Plop. Plop. Hunched over the low table in his charcoal pinstripes, the candidate could not look more uncomfortable—as though he fears accidentally crushing one of these tiny creatures beneath his giant tasseled loafers. Gamely, Cheney shoots the children one of his trademark twisted smiles (an Elvis-like sneer to complement George W. Bush's smirk), but this just makes him look dyspeptic. When the egg in the salt solution bobs to the surface, Cheney swivels toward the class and announces with a particularly mangled grin, "I passed!"

But the suffering isn't over. With the experiment complete, it's time for the would-be veep to take questions from the class. He fixes on one tiny, outstretched arm. "You!" Cheney's finger flies out toward a youngster near the middle of the pack. "Do you like your name?" the munchkin inquires sweetly. Cheney looks baffled. "Do I like my name? Dick! Yes!" he roars with faux enthusiasm. "You!" The finger shoots forward again. "Do you have lots of money?" the little boy asks. (This sends the small media pack into hysterics.) Cheney stands speechless for several heartbeats, shifting his weight from side to side: "Not as much as I had before I got back into politics," he finally responds. Finger flying, Cheney answers another half-dozen queries (Do you have boys? Do you live in the White House? Do you like to fish?) before turning the show over to wife Lynne, who jumps in to ask the kids their names and engage in general grandmotherly chitchat. The candidate looks happiest as he is fleeing the room.

It's been a rough couple of weeks for Dick Cheney. Alone on the campaign trail for only a few days, the former defense secretary has already come under heavy fire for his lackluster campaign style. Al Hunt of "The Capital Gang"has called him a "stiff." *The New York Times*' Maureen Dowd has proclaimed him "dead weight." Even partisan stalwart Robert Novak panned Cheney's poor performance on the Sunday talk shows. Bush's number two "muffed tough questions," Novak charged, and was "unprepared defensively and unarmed offensively."

It wasn't supposed to turn out this way. When they picked him, the Bush folk knew Cheney wasn't exactly dynamic on the stump. This is, after all, the man whom, during his brief flirtation with the presidency in 1996, *Time* magazine described as having a "personal manner so colorless he can make Al Gore seem like Robin Williams." But Team Bush figured that in George W. it had just about all the perkiness a campaign could handle. In fact, what it needed on the ticket was a little gravitas, a little sobriety. If Cheney preferred policy detail to glad-handing, that was dandy, given



STEVE McCRACKEN

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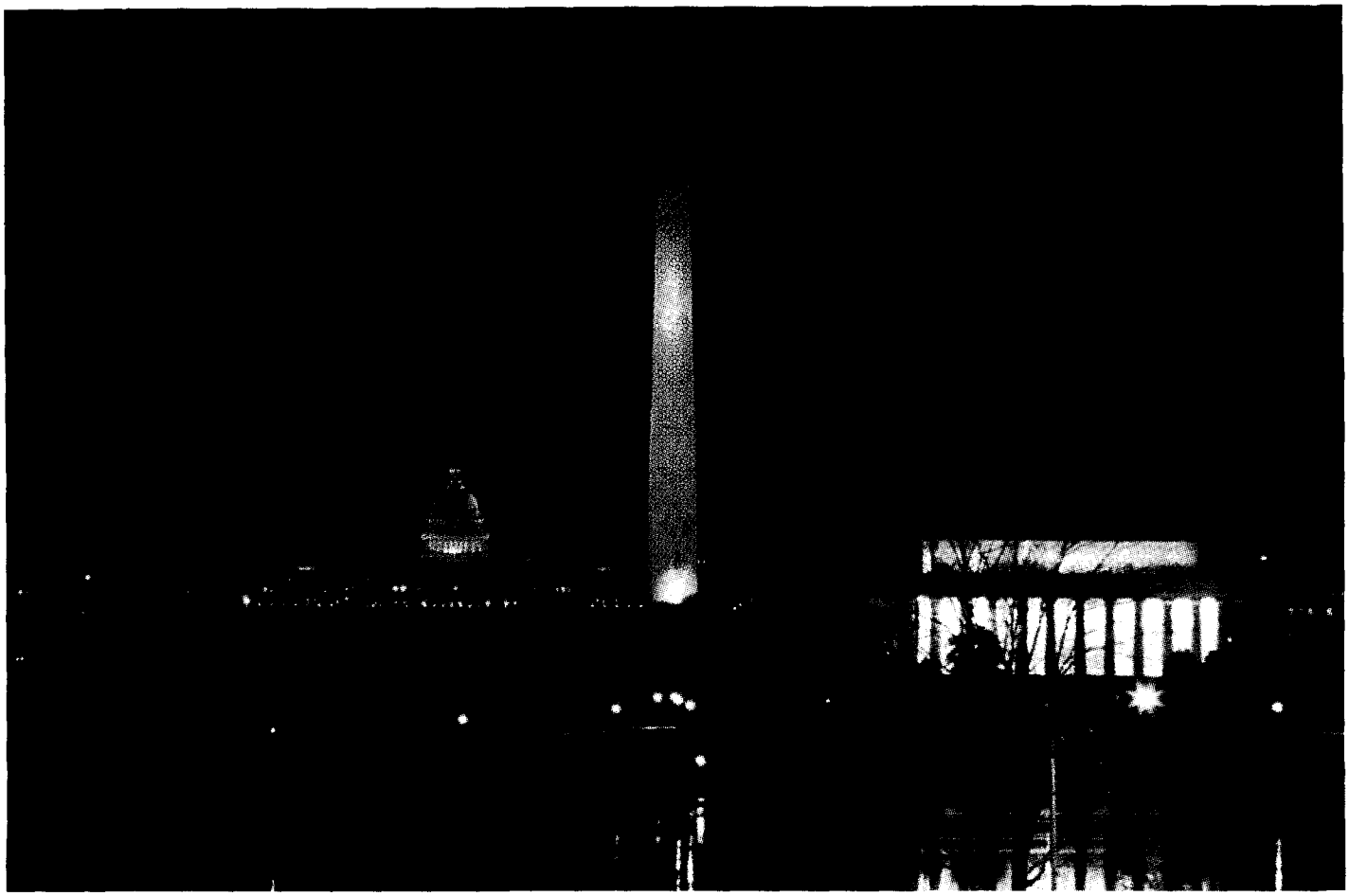
POWERFUL CITY.



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that W. so obviously favored the latter.

But on two important counts the Bush campaign misjudged. First, Cheney may like policy detail, but that doesn't mean he likes *discussing* policy detail, especially with the uneducated boobs you run into on the campaign trail. Second, Cheney may be interested in the details of select policies, but not most. And his interests (global security, corporate finance) don't naturally intersect with those of the electorate (economic security, education, health care). Rather than turning him into an effective complement to George W., five years as a CEO have actually turned Cheney into a parody of Al Gore. He likes policy, but his tastes run to the technical and the obscure, and he enjoys campaigning about as much as he enjoys having his teeth capped. A running mate expected to remind voters what they liked about the Bush administration—its competence and trustworthiness—seems instead to be reminding them why they threw the Bushies out of office: They never seemed all that interested in ordinary people.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR CHENEY, he's running with a guy obsessed with the issue of education, which means he has to talk about it—a lot. Today in Florida, for instance, Cheney is charged with introducing the campaign's proposals on school construction. During his ten-minute (tops) spiel on the subject—given first at Croissant Park and then later at Highland Elementary, just up the road in Lake Worth—Cheney tears through his remarks faster than Newt Gingrich through wives. He barely lifts his head up from his notes and doesn't bother to change his tone of voice, even when he garbles the text. At Highland, addressing an auditorium of fourth and fifth graders as though it were an annual stockholders' meeting, Cheney monotonously warns against the "Washington knows all, one size fits best" mentality (George W. may be embarrassed by his genetic predisposition to verbal blunders; Cheney simply doesn't care). In fact, from his opening "Thank you" to his rousing final sentence ("We are committed to making this investment because we are committed to improving public education throughout America throughout the years to come so that no child is left behind"), the candidate hardly takes a breath. The low, steady drone is actually quite soothing. Now I understand why so many people snooze through business meetings.

After his speech at Croissant Park, Cheney rallies for a mini-roundtable with the national press. Seated at a small conference table in the teachers' lounge, his hands folded loosely atop the dark wood, the candidate looks considerably more at ease than he did during the egg-plopping demo. His gloriously round Charlie Brown forehead is no longer shiny with perspiration. His smile is less tense. He looks downright friendly. But that's because *(a)* there are no voters (or children) anywhere nearby and *(b)* the journalists are asking about the one topic he really digs: defense. Cheney fields the questions deftly, going into considerable (if recycled) detail about force size and deployment strategy. His voice is steady, authoritative, and so low that my voice-activated tape recorder keeps switching off. Even confrontational questions don't faze him. A reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* asks Cheney if he ever used his Pentagon contacts to drum up government contracts for one of Halliburton's subsidiaries. He rejects the suggestion with no sign of perturbation.

But then adult time ends, and Cheney trudges off to another damn school (taking a quick lunch break for fund-raising, of course). In his afternoon speech at Highland Elementary, he once again cruises through his canned remarks on autopilot, follows Lynne's lead in shaking hands with a few kids in the front row, and then beats a hasty retreat for the door. He's wearing the same expression he wore after the egg-plopping demonstration this morning—the same expression, in fact, that he wears almost every time he leaves the company of the voters he's supposed to woo: relief. You can almost hear him mouthing the words to himself: "I passed." I wouldn't be too sure. ■

Can Lieberman close the fund-raising gap?

Jewish Appeal

By SARAH WILDMAN

SINCE JOE LIEBERMAN'S selection as Al Gore's running mate, there has probably been more public talk about Jews in American politics than at any other time in American history. How big is the anti-Semite vote? Is it concentrated in the South? Among Republicans? Among blacks? Will religious Christians vote for a religious Jew? Will Jews turn out in droves? Could they make a difference in Florida? Do the Democrats already win so much of the Jewish vote that it won't matter?

But, amid all the speculation, a potentially more important impact of the Lieberman pick has been widely ignored: The Connecticut senator is a tremendous fund-raising asset in the Jewish community, a community whose increased giving could help keep the Democrats financially competitive this fall. It's been ignored for a reason—the topic scares many Jews stiff. When I broach it with Rabbi Menachem Genack of New Jersey, I can practically hear him wringing his hands on the other end of the line. "It shouldn't look like the Jews are buying the election," he frets. "It shouldn't be a chapter of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*." Another Jewish Democrat worries that people will think "there's this conspiracy of Jewish money to bolster Joe Lieberman's campaign." More than one person tells me that by writing about Lieberman and Jewish fund-raising, I'm doing Pat Buchanan's work for him.

No one knows for sure how much of the Democratic Party's money comes from Jewish contributors ("We don't even have statistics like that," the Democratic National Committee says), but estimates from knowledgeable sources—none willing to speak on the record—start at 30 percent and go up from there. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Jews account for more than one-third of the DNC's largest individual donors ($100,000 and above), based on reports

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released by the Federal Election Commission last month. It's too early to say exactly how much Gore's selection of Lieberman will boost those numbers. But, if anecdotal evidence is to be believed, the DNC could take in $5 to $30 million (up to 75 percent more than Jews have given in previous election cycles) above its anticipated 2000 fund-raising goal of at least $130 million. An additional $30 million would equal almost the entire sum the Democrats spent on advertising this summer. In a tight race where Republicans enjoy a slight financial edge, extra Democratic money could make a difference, probably more of a difference than even the most dramatic swing by Jewish voters.

THE DNC DENIES it has a strategy aimed at Jewish donors. "We have an effort to reach out to everyone who is inspired by this ticket, which I'm sure does include Jewish folks," says DNC Finance Director Brian Hartwich. But others are dubious. In 1996 the DNC "reached out to the Jewish community in somewhat of a coordinated way," says one former top Democratic fund-raiser. "I would imagine they are doing that in some fashion. And then I would bet they are making sure that they call every potential Jewish donor ... making sure they touch base and ask or ask again."

Whether prompted by the DNC or not, Jewish donations to the Democrats have clearly surged since Lieberman was chosen. The week after the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, a group of about 40 longtime "friends of Joe" gathered with Lieberman and Gore for a dinner at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. Each participant had raised roughly $50,000 before the event and committed, that night, to raise $250,000 more in hard money for the DNC. The DNC denies that the dinner was a specifically Jewish event. But the food was glatt kosher, down to the baby new potatoes with sour cream ("Pareve, of course," says caterer David Dahan). And organizer Marvin Lender, scion of the bagel-making family, calls it "the first ... Jewish—if I can characterize it as that, because there were non-Jews there—fund-raising [event] because of Joe."

The dinner was just one manifestation of what Jewish donors describe as an unprecedented fund-raising effort within the community. According to Alan Solomont, a Jewish fund-raiser who was at the Mayflower event and has given more than $250,000 to Democratic campaigns over the past year and a half, "there's a certain spark in the Jewish community. I've been calling people who probably wouldn't have necessarily been motivated to contribute to this effort. But, because they are strongly connected to the Jewish community, I have been ... appealing to the pride they might feel in having this door open that probably people felt would be closed forever." Solomont has committed to hosting a Gore-Lieberman event to "reach out to the Jewish community" of Boston when the candidates come to town. Says Steven Grossman, a former DNC national chairman and a longtime Jewish activist and fund-raiser, "I think you will see a very significant increase in [hard money] contributions, smaller dollar contributions, $500, $1,000 contributions."

But Solomont and Grossman are die-hard Democrats; they would have raised money for Gore with or without Lieberman on the ticket. Potentially more significant is the way the Connecticut senator's selection is turning fund-raisers for Jewish causes into fund-raisers for Gore-Lieberman. Lender, a past president of the United Jewish Appeal, gave money to the DNC in 1992 and 1996 but emphasizes that before this election he'd "never raised a political dollar in [his] life." Now, in addition to upping his personal contribution, he helped organize the Mayflower event. And that's only the beginning. "I'm working now," Lender says. "I'm out raising money."

Will the Jewish community's remarkable financial effort on the Democratic ticket's behalf make a difference? Not, it hardly needs saying, in the way Pat Buchanan might imagine. Gore and Lieberman's Jewish donors are not trying to make the ticket beholden to "Jewish interests," whatever those are. They disagree among themselves on many questions of policy, and their support is more an act of communal pride than an investment in future behavior. But the donations could affect the election nonetheless. And so, in an odd historical footnote, the most important electoral effect of Joe Lieberman's selection may remain largely hidden from a public that seems otherwise obsessed with his candidacy's every detail. ■

Montana Dispatch

Stoke

By FLORENCE WILLIAMS

"I THINK THAT by failing to do the things you are called to do in a balanced way," Marc Racicot tells me, "you are just as accountable as if you purposefully and knowingly set about to damage the resource." Racicot, Montana's two-term governor, is talking about the forest fires that have ravaged his state all summer, torching an area more than half the size of Delaware. And he's talking about the Clinton administration. For weeks, he's talked about little else.

Racicot is riding shotgun in a Chevy Tahoe on his way to the Townsend fairgrounds, now a makeshift fire command center. Later today, he'll fly via C-12 military transport to Dillon, a town of 8,426 that was caught between a pair of large fires, 20 and 25 miles away. There, the governor will commiserate with residents—many of them conservative ranchers, most of them angry and anxious. Mostly, he'll tell them what he told me: We can hold the federal government responsible for this charred, wasted mess. "This administration's system of management is out of balance," Racicot says. "We could have started years ago in terms of cleaning up these forests."

It's a refrain Racicot has brought not only to Montanans but to national audiences as well—he's been a regular on the talk-show circuit since mid-August. "[I]t goes back over the past eight years," he told "Good Morning America" viewers in a typical appearance. "[I]t's left our forest in a condition of

FLORENCE WILLIAMS is a writer in western Montana.

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being a powder keg." More than once, Racicot has gone head-to-head on television with Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, whose job, notably, will soon be up for grabs. The pairing hardly seems accidental. Thanks to Montana's term limits, Racicot, a friend of George W. Bush, will also be in the market for a job at the end of the year. And, before his speech at last month's Republican convention, Racicot—whose recent partisanship has marked a departure from his previous consensus-oriented style—was introduced to delegates as the possible next interior secretary of the United States.

Racicot wouldn't be the first Cabinet hopeful to ride to Washington on the coattails of a state disaster. Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating, once on George W.'s vice presidential shortlist and now touted as his attorney-general-in-waiting, leaped to national prominence with his handling of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. But there's a difference. Where Keating offered the victims justice and compassion, Racicot offers them a scapegoat.

A MODERATE WITH a soft spot for extractive industry, Racicot (pronounced "Roscoe" in mountain-state Franglais) has enjoyed higher popularity ratings—nearly 80 percent—than any of his recent predecessors. To environmentalists, though, he is the governor who weakened state water-quality laws, opposed a successful ballot initiative banning cyanide-assisted mining, and ordered the killing of bison wandering outside Yellowstone National Park, to protect private livestock from possible but dubious infection by brucellosis. But like Bush, another affable guy with a good tan, Racicot employs a successful politics of personality. Today he's wearing spit-shiny cowboy boots, a denim shirt, and creased Wranglers with a honking big belt buckle displaying a silver Montana Department of Justice medallion.

In Dillon, the air is refreshingly smoke-free, but the nearby hills look hazy and blue-gray from the fires. At Western Montana College, Racicot takes the podium in the Lewis and Clark conference room and begins praising the heroic, military-like efforts of interagency and volunteer firefighters. Next, he tallies the cost of the fires: $2 million a day in fire-caused unemployment, $3 million a day in personnel and equipment—including 700 fire engines, 2.5 million feet of water hose, and 33,000 pairs of Nomex jeans, not to mention 5 Blackhawk helicopters, 286 bulldozers, and 12 planes spraying flame retardant.

Then it's the audience's turn. An elderly woman wearing sandals with socks and bright orange eyeglass Croakies waves a piece of paper, claiming she has evidence that climate change is being technically manipulated by proponents of one-world government. Racicot promises her that anyone found responsible will be prosecuted and swiftly moves on to a woman in jeans and a red vest. She says the environmentalists are taking over the government and Clinton is tying the hands of the firefighters. She adds that she saw the governor on ABC with Sam Donaldson and was disappointed that he appeared to be softening his criticism of the administration.

"I have backed off of nothing," Racicot replies emphatically. The Clintonites, he continues, are "not exclusively, solely responsible" for the fires, "but they have neglected forest health and left us vulnerable to more intense fires.... I believe they are sadly mistaken in their management of our lands." The crowd breaks into applause.

Racicot's central argument is that under Clinton, decreased logging in national forests has led to a buildup of "fuels," which, in turn, has fed the massive fires. It sounds more plausible than blaming the administration for Montana's long drought, but it's no more accurate. The forests are indeed denser and thicker than they should be, but not because of excessive environmentalism. In fact, the problem stems mostly from a century of weed introduction, overgrazing, and fire suppression to protect industry and human settlements. "It just belies the facts to say the fires are the administration's fault," says Chris Wood, a senior aide to the U.S. Forest Service chief. "It's no one's fault. For decades it was national policy to put out all fires by ten a.m." Frequent natural fires clear undergrowth, supply nitrogen, and help forests regenerate, but, ever since a deadly Western blaze in 1910, the government has been quick to put out all wildfires. Under Clinton, the feds have wisely reversed course, increasing prescribed burns and other fire-reduction treatments fourfold since 1994. But starting fires on purpose isn't an easy political sell—"controlled burn" sounds like an oxymoron, and it occasionally is: witness Los Alamos last spring.

Racicot and other Western Republicans envision a more self-serving fire-management tool: logging. Timber harvests on Montana's national forests have declined more than 70 percent in the last ten years (though state and private forests have largely picked up the slack), and now the administration is considering a proposal to ban future logging roads in roadless areas. Racicot's rural constituents, understandably, find these trends threatening. But, contrary to local wisdom, logging does not fireproof a forest. A bipartisan report to Congress last week pointed out that logging can actually contribute to tinderbox conditions by leaving behind piles of dead slash. Most fire experts agree that some mechanical thinning of dense forests is needed, particularly near populated areas. But this is essentially the opposite of commercial logging, since it would target small-diameter trees and brush (which you couldn't give away as lumber) rather than big trees, which are naturally fire-resistant.

Three-quarters of the Montana land now burning *was* heavily logged and roaded within the last 50 years. Many of the fires are not even torching dense forest but grasslands and private property. Earlier today, Racicot visited the edge of the Toston-Maudlow fire, a 75,000-acre blaze south of Helena ignited by a combine spark in a wheat field. To go there and proclaim Clinton even remotely responsible is absurd.

BUT THE ANGER Racicot is tapping isn't just about fire. Consider the economic history of the last 25 years through the eyes of a Montana rancher. Over the past quarter-century, the price you can get for your beef has declined, while the number of regulations on your federal allotment has increased. First, the feds told you to ease up on streamside grazing; then they reintroduced the wolves that your grand-

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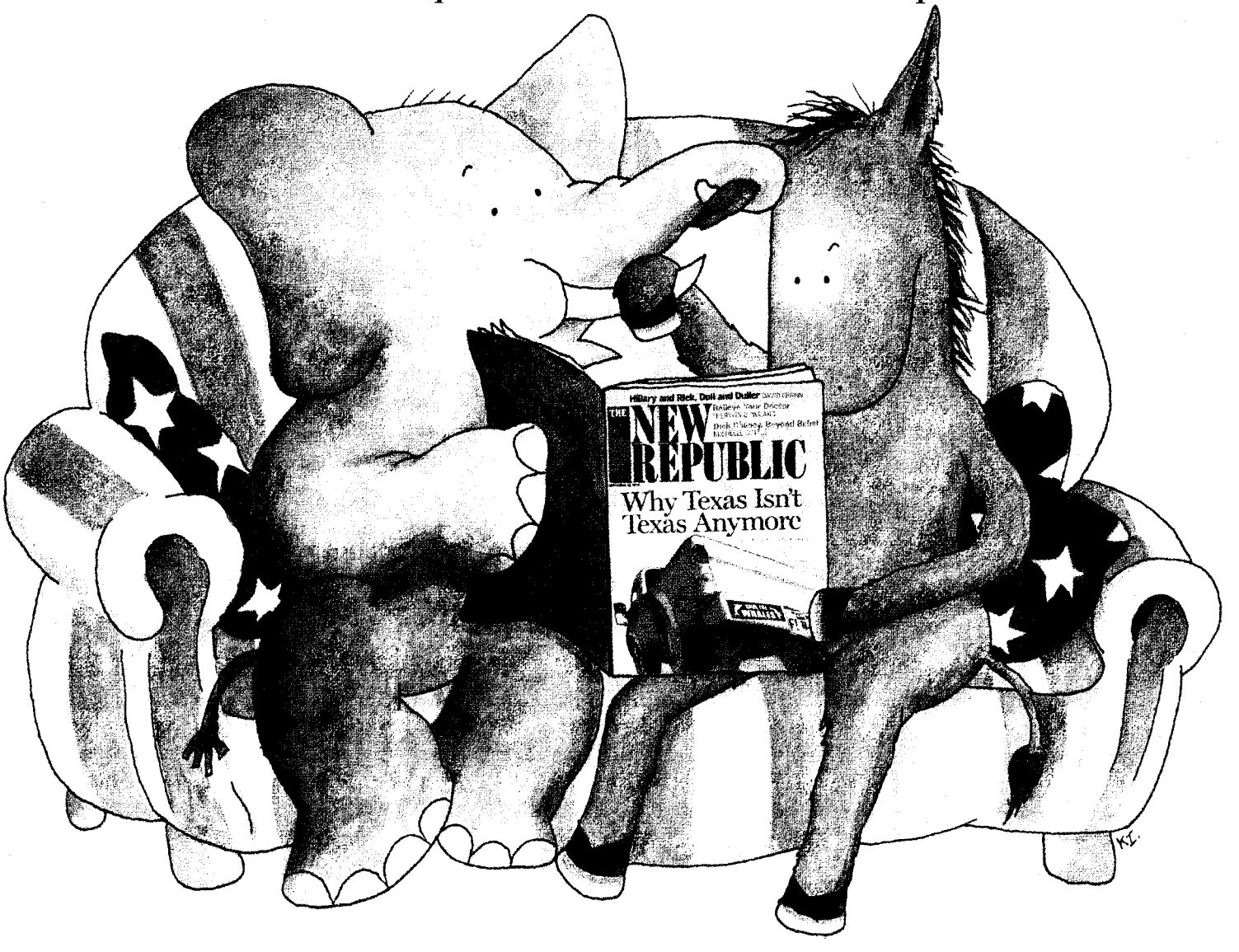

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father worked so hard to wipe out. Yes, your land is worth a fortune because a buffalo mogul named Ted Turner wants it, but your kids will lose half the profit from a sale in estate taxes. Moreover, where urbanites see fires burning Bambiland, countryfolk see wasted board feet of timber and, more importantly, a smoldering symbol of their powerlessness over land they once freely controlled. As a ranch wife sitting next to me at the Dillon meeting said, "Why are we importing timber when we can burn it up here? Why are we letting it go to hell? Excuse my language, honey, but I'm mad."

The awesome reality of this year's fires is that nothing could have prevented them. "We cannot emphasize enough how dry it is out there," says Jack Cohen, a fire-behavior scientist with the U.S. Forest Service's Fire Sciences Laboratory in Missoula. Like a 100-year flood, this is a 100-year fire, caused primarily by extreme drought and aggravated by 90 years of fire suppression and foolhardy sprawl. Before it began raining last week, the forest wood's moisture content was measuring as low as 4 percent, half the normal moisture of kiln-dried commercial lumber. "I am really offended, quite frankly, that the fires are being used to promote demagoguery and special agendas," Cohen adds. "It doesn't do the public any good, and it just perpetuates ignorance about how landscapes operate."

But don't tell that to Marc Racicot. "I'm heartsick that we're so vulnerable because of past forest-management practices," he tells his Dillon audience. "I believe these fires will lead us to a different day of management." He probably knows just the man for the job. ■

Pristina Dispatch

Red Ink

By Joshua Hammer

Petar Topoljski was no one's idea of a model citizen. His father, whom U.N. sources describe as a paramilitary commando, worked hand in hand with the Yugoslav armed forces to ethnically cleanse Pristina. The 25-year-old Topoljski allegedly accompanied his father on patrols and led an informal gang of uniformed Serb youths who harassed Albanians during last year's 78-day NATO bombing campaign. Topoljski and his father also—allegedly—stashed guns and ammunition in their apartment, looted their neighbors' belongings, and even evicted an Albanian from his home and commandeered it for themselves. "His father was a bad guy, a paramilitary thug," says a U.N. source in Pristina. "Petar was just a punk." After the war, Topoljski and his father joined the mass exodus of Serbs leaving Kosovo. But after a few months Petar returned to Pristina, where he found a job as a translator for the United Nations.

He might have worked at the U.N. office indefinitely if a former neighbor hadn't spotted him there last spring. She told a reporter at the fledgling newspaper *Dita*, which is owned and operated by Belul Beqaj, a crony of former Kosovo Liberation Army Commander Hashim Thaci. Beqaj was furious. "The United Nations is supposed to be catching war criminals," he says. "Instead, they were giving them nice jobs." Beqaj dispatched reporters to interview Topoljski's former neighbors, asked Topoljski for an interview (Beqaj says Topoljski refused), and sent a photographer to snap his picture. On April 27, *Dita* published an article describing Topoljski's alleged actions during the war, complete with a photo. Eleven days later, Topoljski's body was found on a riverbank outside Pristina. He had been garroted with a wire and stabbed to death.

Topoljski's murder has ignited a furious debate in Kosovo about the rise of "vigilante media"—publications that "out" alleged war criminals living freely in the province. During the past six months, a half-dozen Kosovar newspapers and magazines have published the names, photographs, and sometimes even home addresses of Serbs suspected of having murdered or abused Albanians during the war. The practice has outraged U.N. officials, especially Bernard Kouchner, the chief U.N. administrator known for his dramatic and sometimes dictatorial gestures. Shortly after the Topoljski murder, Kouchner closed *Dita* for eight days and ordered tight new censorship rules for the local press.

Kouchner's decision has provoked a media revolt, with Beqaj at its forefront. Beqaj has refused to stop exposing suspects and has rallied nearly every influential media figure in Kosovo, as well as international press groups, to his cause. He claims that the United Nations is violating the freedom of the press and that its failure to capture and prosecute alleged war criminals has necessitated the media's efforts to expose them. His opponents, fearing more incidents like the Topoljski murder, say regulation is desperately needed in Kosovo's powder-keg atmosphere. "We're in a postwar, transitory democracy in a violent time, with people whose culture predisposes them to take revenge," says Simon Haselock, Kosovo's new media regulator. "You're able to publish information that won't stand up in a court of law, but that's enough to get a person killed."

United Nations officials say they've already tried letting Kosovo's journalists police themselves. In the early days of U.N. administration, the only law regulating the press was a "hate speech" statute that vaguely barred language deemed likely to spark violence against individuals or ethnic groups. But the law was repeatedly tested and found to be toothless. In March, the newspaper *Bota Sot* published an inflammatory editorial titled "All Serbs Who Still Live in Kosovo Are War Criminals." The same month, the newspaper *Zeri I Kosoves* revealed the names of two "Serb vagabonds" who had allegedly killed Albanians during the war and were now, the paper reported, working for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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and living in Pristina. (The pair fled Kosovo after the article was published.) In both cases, the United Nations decided not to invoke the hate-speech law, and the rest of the Kosovo media refused to censure the papers.

Then came the Topoljski incident. Although it was (and remains) uncertain whether Topoljski's murder was actually a revenge killing, Kouchner and his media advisers decided they had to act. U.N. police padlocked *Dita*'s offices on June 3. Two weeks later, the U.N. mission made it illegal to publish the names, addresses, or photographs of war-crimes suspects not formally accused by a court. Kosovo's media cried foul. In an interview, Veton Surroi, publisher of *Koha Ditore*, Kosovo's most respected newspaper, accused the U.N. administrator of Milosevic-style tactics. The World Press Freedom Committee, an international media watchdog group, also excoriated the new rules. But the most aggressive challenge came from *Dita* itself. Days after the newspaper reopened, Beqaj defiantly republished the Topoljski story. On June 25, he printed another illegal article—this one naming two suspected paramilitary killers in the Pristina area. And on July 4 *Dita* identified 15 alleged paramilitary members said to still be living in Kosovo and ran accompanying photographs of the men in uniform. Among those singled out was a parish priest in the town of Gjilan who "after the commission of each massacre blessed the criminals."

Emboldened by *Dita*, other publications have joined the vigilante crusade. *Kosovija*, a monthly women's magazine, ran a piece, titled "Nightmare Slaughterers," naming eleven Gypsies who were allegedly members of paramilitary groups. "The slaughterers remain slaughterers," the article warned, "and they continue to live on blood." *Rilindja*, Kosovo's oldest newspaper, published "Criminals Privileged and Albanians Destroyed," which named half a dozen "proven criminals" now living in the Serb enclaves around north Mitrovica.

THE MEDIA ONSLAUGHT has left U.N. officials frustrated and perplexed. Threatened with closure, the editors of *Kosovija* and *Rilindja* ultimately apologized and promised not to violate the rules again. But *Dita* publisher Beqaj—despite being slapped with a $12,500 fine and another order to close down—has vowed to continue defying the United Nations. Sitting in his office on the ninth floor of Pristina's Media House, a dilapidated firetrap that Kouchner recently condemned and ordered vacated, Beqaj claims he'll go on a hunger strike if the United Nations sends in the police. "It feels unpleasant that a man was killed because of the *Dita* story," says Beqaj. "But I'm fighting for a principle. I'm trying to help bring justice to Kosovo." Some critics, however, suggest that Beqaj's actions have been motivated as much by profit as by principle: the controversy has boosted the circulation of his struggling newspaper from 10,000 to more than 12,000 in the last three months.

Yet for all the questions regarding Beqaj's motives and tactics, the law enforcement failures he claims to be responding to are real. The justice system in Kosovo is barely functional, with U.N. Judicial Affairs Director Sylvie Pantz describing 75 percent of the international police force as "incompetent." Although a few dozen accused Serb war criminals have been apprehended in Kosovo, many remain free, especially in the Serb stronghold of north Mitrovica. And, even when they're arrested, the United Nations seems to have trouble keeping them. In early August, three indicted Serb war criminals, claiming to be sick, were transported from the U.N.-administered court to a Serb-controlled hospital in Mitrovica. There, after receiving a rousing welcome from the staff, they escaped from their hospital beds in the middle of the night. Then, last week, 15 Serbs awaiting trial for genocide and war crimes overpowered their guards and escaped from their Mitrovica jail into the surrounding woods, prompting Kouchner to order a review of all of Kosovo's prisons. "This is a very bad signal for the rest of the people in Kosovo, who had depended on us to bring people to justice from the war of last year," a U.N. spokesperson said.

At present, it's unclear how the feud between the United Nations and the media will resolve itself. "We've gotten ourselves into a Mexican standoff," Haselock says. In recent weeks, *Dita* has refrained from publishing additional names of alleged war criminals, and Haselock has made no attempt to close the paper or collect the $12,500 fine. But, with municipal elections approaching in October, Haselock fears more trouble may be imminent. Several politicians have already been murdered this summer, and U.N. officials fear that a wave of press vilifications could lead to more killing—this time of candidates rather than alleged war criminals. "The atmosphere," Haselock says warily, "is going to be electric." In postwar Kosovo, it seems, character assassination is taking on a whole new meaning. ■

Lazio vs. Hillary: Who will gaffe last?

Scared Stiff

By DAVID GRANN

THE TRACKER WAS right on Rick Lazio's tail. He wore khakis and an Oxford shirt and trained his digital camera on Lazio as the candidate worked the crowd at last week's New York state fair. He was younger than anyone else in the entourage and tried to linger in the back, among the press, where he was less conspicuous. But occasionally, as the candidate turned a corner or paused to shake a voter's hand, you could see him and his camera, his shirt slightly untucked, his eye squinting through the lens, recording every word and deed.

The campaign first noticed him weeks earlier at a rally in upstate New York. When he appeared to follow them to Manhattan, aides launched an "investigation," which confirmed what the congressman already suspected. The man was what's known in the industry as a "tracker"—a low-paid spy used to log hundreds of hours of video footage, lying in wait for the fateful gaffe, the sudden stumble that can be cut and

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spliced into an attack ad.

Initially, the Lazio campaign treated its intruder good-naturedly. At a pizzeria in Brooklyn, the candidate offered the tracker a slice, which he reluctantly accepted. "Let me introduce someone else," Lazio later announced to a small group of supporters outside the Tioga County Courthouse, pointing to the tracker's camera. "Let's all say hello to Hillary Clinton and the whole Clinton campaign."

But, as the days have worn on, Lazio, initially less guarded than most politicians, has seemed increasingly uncomfortable. He speaks more and more mechanically, carefully measuring his utterances. His aides, meanwhile, have grown hostile. At the state fair, they tried to block the tracker's view; some heckled him, repeating, "Shame on you, shame on you." When the tracker continued to film, the aides asked the local police to keep him away, and for a brief moment he was detained. The Lazio campaign has even tried to serve Hillary a dose of her own medicine: a Lazio intern recently sneaked past the Secret Service and infiltrated a press conference on Clinton's lawn in Chappaqua.

In the past, these interlopers—one was reportedly seen stalking Rudy Giuliani during his 1998 New York City mayoral run—were no more than a footnote, a quirk of New York's bare-knuckle politics. Yet this year they have become one of the Senate campaign's most enduring symbols: shadowy figures waiting to pounce on the tiniest human foible. Indeed, the race has become a constant search for the knockout gaffe, with the New York media crush—the competing tabloids, the cable-TV networks, the mighty *Times*, the shock jocks—joining the trackers, its offspring, in the hunt. In response, both candidates have retreated into their shells, resorting to a kind of rhetorical Muzak whose utter vacuousness ensures that it cannot possibly offend. And the race, which pundits once billed as "the battle of the titans" and "Viagra for the media," has become the one thing no one ever expected: dull.

IF LAZIO HAS grown increasingly stilted, he still has a ways to go to catch up with his opponent. Once an edgy, outspoken left-liberal, Hillary Clinton is now the prototype of the modern politician, her mouth stretched in a permanent smile, her speeches and press conferences laced with poll-tested platitudes ("working families," "it's about children"). After committing several gaffes early on in the campaign—proclaiming her lifelong affection for the Yankees, not denouncing Suha Arafat's attack on Israel—Clinton is now, as her advisers cheerfully put it, always "on message." "I don't think people realize how much concentration is required and how focused you have to be all the time," she told the *New York Post* when asked about the threat of gaffes. "It's tough."

But she's certainly doing her best. At a recent City Hall press conference on hate-crime legislation, the media tried desperately to force the first lady off message—to offer more than just sound bites about her "United Against Hate" coalition. But when a reporter asked her to comment on the Security and Exchange Commission's decision not to investigate Lazio's 600 percent profits from his stock-option trades—profits some of Clinton's surrogates had questioned—the first lady replied, "I have nothing to say about that."

"Do you have anything to say about ... the new police commissioner?" another reporter beseeched.

"You know, I only know what I read, and, ah, uh, I'm ... I'm very supportive of continuing, ah, you know, to do the very best job we can here in the city, and, uh, I look forward to meeting with him and working with him in the future.... Thank you all."

People close to both campaigns say the candidates have learned from history; they base their caution on the last two great New York Senate battles, in which candidates were seemingly felled by a single word. In 1992, Democrat Bob Abrams seemed on the verge of upsetting Al D'Amato's bid for a third Senate term. Then late one night, after hours of campaigning and only weeks before the election, Abrams called his opponent a "fascist." He said it—"blurted [it] out", as he later explained—after Republican hecklers had interrupted his previous campaign stop.

But the mitigating circumstances didn't matter. D'Amato, a short, truculent man who sometimes referred to himself as a "pit bull," quickly released a commercial in which he took umbrage on behalf of all Italian-Americans. "Bob Abrams called Al D'Amato a fascist," the narrator said ominously over slow-motion footage of Benito Mussolini. "Bob Abrams's reputation is stained and dishonored forever." D'Amato, trailing at the time of the gaffe, came from behind to win.

Six years later it was D'Amato's turn. Speaking before a small gathering of Jews less than three weeks before the 1998 election, D'Amato jokingly referred to his opponent, Charles Schumer, as a "putzhead"—a Yiddish-based word that loosely means "bumbling fool" or, more literally, "penis-head." After Schumer and the press seized the remark, D'Amato initially denied he'd said it. But, as the evidence mounted, he stammered, "People say I said it, [and] I believe I said it if they tell me." Within days, Schumer came out with a 30-second TV spot titled "Slur," showing D'Amato denying on videotape what he acknowledged only hours later. D'Amato never recovered. As city Comptroller Alan Hevesi later explained,

GLENN HEAD

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"'Putzhead' changed the election."

Not surprisingly, this year's candidates are determined to avoid a gaffe at all costs. But, as they retreat into an ever more self-protective, inauthentic crouch—their words stilted, their gestures contrived—the press only grows hungrier for a gaffe, which, as Michael Kinsley once noted, almost always occurs when a politician says what he or she actually believes. "Everyone is just waiting for someone to slip up and make some real news," one reporter in the press pool told me. "Just something that hasn't been recycled 600 times—that's real." Until it occurs, there is a kind of comic standoff, where both sides are left to feed a daily news vacuum with whatever bits of drama they can drum up.

Recently, when the first lady mentioned in a stump speech that the Clintons' dog, Buddy, had visited her house in New York, the press went into a brief frenzy. *What was Buddy doing?* they asked, grilling Clinton aides and friends. *Did he like it? Did the president feed him?* Later, when a small can of pepper spray went off in someone's purse at a campaign event in Yonkers, it sparked even more excitement among the press. "There was coughing and choking . . . I'm still coughing from this shit," one reporter told his editor as he dictated the story over his cell phone. "Not a 'panic.' Call it an 'incipient panic.'"

"Incredible," he added. "There's a story."

"GAS ATTACK!" cried another reporter, joking about tabloid headlines the next morning.

The campaigns, meanwhile, spit out a blizzard of fake news as grist for the hungry pack: "WHERE WAS CLINTON WHILE LAZIO PROTECTED NY'S NATURAL RESOURCES?"; "CLINTON CAMPAIGN FILES STRONG FEC REPORT."

But it's so cynical and fake that it makes reporters yearn for a gaffe even more—so much, in fact, that they have gradually defined the gaffe down. A gaffe is now Lazio tripping or Hillary mispronouncing the name of a city. There was, for instance, what the Associated Press called the "calf-gaffe," when Lazio told a gathering of farmers in upstate New York that his children were off "milk[ing] a little calf," as opposed to a cow. Last week there was even a brouhaha when Lazio didn't partake of the local sausage at the state fair, while the first lady, as President Clinton gloated, gobbled hers up. "Growing up in New York, and with a name like Lazio, I'm sure our candidate is a bit more acquainted with sausage, not to mention peppers and onions, than Mrs. Clinton," a Lazio spokesman defensively told the *New York Post*.

Given that almost everyone following this year's Senate campaign has become a tracker of one kind or another, I figured I might as well hang out with the real one. As we circled the state fairgrounds one warm afternoon, I slipped a few feet behind him and peered over his shoulder through the camera's lens. I could see the back of Lazio's head, a thick clump of black hair that seemed to grow larger as we came closer. As the tracker homed in, I asked the congressman how it felt to be followed by a camera every moment of every day. "I think the worst part . . ." he started to answer when an aide cut him off. "Didn't we already have the question-and-answer period with the press?" the aide said, forcing me to the side.

So I turned to the tracker, hoping he might offer me some insight he had gleaned from all these months of watching the campaign. "What's your name?" I asked, introducing myself. But, unlike Lazio or Hillary, he didn't even pretend to answer my question. "You can't even give me your name?" I asked.

He shook his head. I pressed him harder. Finally, after several more tries, he spoke: "If you have any questions, you'll have to ask Peter Kauffmann."

"Who's Peter Kauffmann?" I asked.

"The Democratic Party spokesman."

As I scribbled down what he said, the tracker suddenly looked at me in panic. "I really can't talk to you," he said. "That's all off the record." ■

Why Texas looks like America.

Lone Star Joining

By BENJAMIN SOSKIS

ELECTION 2000 MAY come down to Texas—not its electoral votes, which are safely in the pocket of George W. Bush, but its political identity. Both presidential campaigns realize that Texas is to this race what Massachusetts was to 1988: if you can define the state, you can define its governor. For Bush, that means aligning himself with his state's reputation for boundless opportunity, vast self-confidence, and relaxed good humor. In their answer to the Clinton campaign's legendary *The Man From Hope*, the biographical film that introduced the Arkansas governor to the country in 1992, the Bush campaign at the Philadelphia GOP convention showed W. on a prairie in Crawford, Texas, site of his yet-to-be-completed ranch. He spoke about his hometown. "There used to be a slogan in Midland that said 'The sky is the limit,' which really is such an optimistic slogan," Bush mused. "It's how I feel about America, really." Clad in blue jeans and a cowboy hat, he extolled the virtues of the Texas frontier. He waxed lyrical about "dreamers—the doers who take risks and sometimes failed, but then rose above failure to achieve greater good things." Then he climbed into his blue pickup truck and, passing a well-placed calf, drove off toward the horizon.

Al Gore, of course, is trying to evoke a different image:

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Texas as economic and cultural backwater. If Bush has the "Proud of Texas Committee," which touts the state's old-fashioned virtues, Gore has the "Texas Truth Squad," which notes endlessly that Texas ranks near the bottom of the nation in categories that connote enlightenment (child health care, clean air) and near the top in those that connote primitivism (incarceration, gun violence, cow-manure production). By Election Day, one Democratic strategist boasts, Gore will have turned Texas "into a Third World country."

Gore and Bush aren't trying to create stereotypes of Texas. They're doing something far easier—tapping into stereotypes that already exist. They're playing on the flip side of Texas's reputation as exceptional, a state whose cultural distinctiveness has uniquely withstood homogenizing national influences. Even before this campaign, many liberals viewed Texas as a world apart, a state where, in the words of lefty *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert, "compassion is virtually illegal." Just as conservatives didn't need much convincing to believe that Massachusetts was a place of oppressive taxation and rampant political correctness, liberals already believed that Texas abused its poor—Al Gore just filled in the details. Likewise, conservatives didn't need much convincing to believe that Bush supports self-reliance and personal freedom, because, after all, his state is one of the few places where they still reign.

THERE IS, OF course, some truth to both images. It probably is easier to start a business in Texas than in New York. And swaths of the Lone Star State really do suffer from deep social underdevelopment and government neglect—neglect Gore and the press would be derelict to ignore. But the odd thing about the Bush-Gore fight over the meaning of Texas is that its very premise, Texas exceptionalism, is increasingly anachronistic. By buying into one side or another of the Texas frontier myth—by accepting that the state is somehow set apart, either by its rugged individualism or by its prideful backwardness—the candidates and the press have ignored the striking new reality on the ground: Texas is becoming more like the rest of the nation than anyone, Texan or non-Texan, wants to admit.

It started with the oil bust. For much of the postwar era, Texas's reputation as distinct from the rest of the country stood on firm economic ground: its economy was countercyclical. When the price of oil was high, as in the Carter years, the nation foundered but Texas boomed. When the price of oil dropped and the country rebounded under Ronald Reagan, Texas crashed. "When I first came here," says Rice University sociologist Stephen Klineberg, "the rule of thumb was, if things are good in Boston, they're going to be bad for us in Houston, and vice versa."

But the 1980s oil bust, which hit harder and lasted longer than almost anyone had predicted, changed that. Third-lowest in the country in 1980, the state's unemployment rate was ninth-highest by 1990. Over the same period, the number of Texans living in poverty grew 47 percent. Slowly and painfully, the economy began to diversify, as companies that once fixed oil rigs retooled to service computers and televisions. In 1982, around 30 percent of state revenue came from severance taxes on oil and gas; by 1988, that figure had dropped to 8 percent.

Since then, the state has nursed itself back to economic health by embracing the same industry that has remade the economy nationally: technology. Two decades ago, high tech accounted for just over 5 percent of the state's economic output; today, it accounts for nearly 9 percent. Indeed, more Texans now work in high tech as work in oil, gas drilling, refining, and agriculture combined. According to a recent study by the American Electronics Association, Texas ranks second in semiconductor and office-computer manufacturing and is the nation's second-largest electronics exporter. In fact, according to a study by Bernard Weinstein of the University of North Texas, the state's economy has so dramatically aligned itself with the rest of the country's that, for the first time in modern history, rising gas prices do Texas more harm than good: every $1 increase in the price of natural gas cuts economic activity by some $3.4 billion a year and adds another 35,000 people to the ranks of the unemployed. "For a long time Texas was different," Weinstein explains. "Well, it ain't another country anymore."

That could be the unofficial motto of Tyler, Texas. A few months ago, I visited this friendly town of 84,000 in the green, eastern part of the state. Tyler is best known for its fall Rose Festival—an archaic, lavish blend of debutante ball and Mardi Gras. Recently, though, the town has gained another distinction: it is one of the state's hottest technology hubs, ranked the fourteenth-fastest-growing tech town in the nation by the California-based Milken Institute.

For most of the twentieth century, Tyler's economic fortunes depended on oil. In 1930, a 70-year-old wildcatter struck black gold at the Daisy Bradford Farm, 20 miles away. The discovery ushered in the East Texas oil boom, and Tyler, whose paved streets distinguished it from many nearby towns, became the regional service center for the fledgling industry. Tyler shrugged off the Depression and thrived for the next few decades, attracting a number of major manufacturing firms. Then the bust hit. Between 1981 and 1989, the number of residents employed in the oil and gas industries dropped by more than half. "It knocked everyone out of the saddle," says Kevin Eltife, the town's 41-year-old mayor. "We had to create a whole new city."

NOW TYLER IS a boomtown again. But it's a different sort of boom. The town boasts two nationally ranked not-for-profit hospitals, and medicine has become one of its largest employers. Three years ago, the University of Texas granted its Tyler satellite full four-year status, and soon afterward, a College of Engineering opened, followed by a $20 million cultural center. The College of Engineering, which will churn out 30 graduates a year, helps provide Tyler with the kind of tech-savvy labor pool that attracts employers. Indeed, the number of tech employees in town has doubled in the last decade to nearly 3,000, twice as many people as are employed in the town's famed oil and gas sector.

To be sure, Tyler retains touches of East Texas folksiness: just as Eltife, the son of Lebanese immigrants, brandishes a convincing drawl, so the downtown eateries have names like

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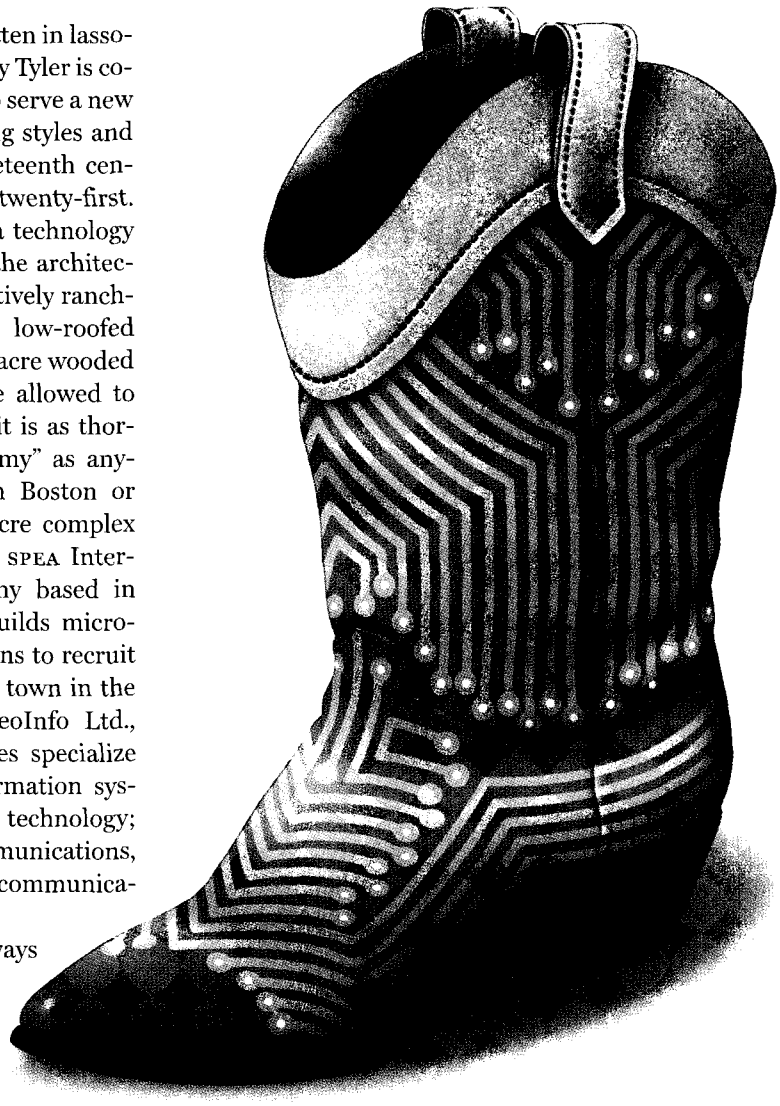
"The Feed Lott" written in lasso-like fonts. But mostly Tyler is co-opting old images to serve a new reality, appropriating styles and symbols of the nineteenth century to adorn the twenty-first. At the Jordan Plaza technology park, for example, the architectural style is distinctively ranch-like: twelve wide, low-roofed buildings face a 20-acre wooded park, which will be allowed to remain "wild." But it is as thoroughly "new economy" as anything you'd find in Boston or San Jose: the 60-acre complex is full of firms like SPEA International, a company based in Turin, Italy, that builds microchip testers and plans to recruit 50 engineers to the town in the next five years; GeoInfo Ltd., whose 50 employees specialize in geographic information systems and mapping technology; and Fair Point Communications, a 25-person telecommunications firm.



Tyler still has a ways to go before it becomes another Silicon Valley. Its nightlife, according to some of the town's younger residents, could use some work. David Buhrkuhl, a semiretired businessman who serves as head of SPEA's American division, actually worries that until the nightlife improves, SPEA might have a hard time attracting twentysomething engineers. "You can't compare Tyler to South Hampton," admits Eltife. But when I ask the Birkenstock-clad mayor whether Tyler might look more like Austin after a decade of development, he pauses for a moment—perhaps contemplating images of Austin's frolicking hippies and militant environmentalists—smiles, and replies, "Sure."

AND THE TRANSFORMATION I saw in Tyler is playing out on a much grander scale in Texas's large metropolitan centers. In 1940, the state was 80 percent rural; now it is 85 percent urban. Of the 570,000 domestic migrants to Texas in the '90s, more than 80 percent settled in the high-tech suburbs outside Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Austin. Last year, for instance, Yahoo! set up shop in an abandoned warehouse in Dallas's Deep Ellum district, once one of the nation's most infamous skid rows, prompting at least a dozen Internet-related firms to follow; Dell Computer has called Austin home for years. Dallas now ranks fourth nationally in number of high-tech workers; Houston ranks fourteenth; Austin, fifteenth. Even Waco, a city that doesn't exactly enjoy a reputation for forward thinking, has witnessed a 60 percent growth in high-tech output over the last five years.

Texas's economic changes are sparking social ones. The state has experienced surges of professional migration before. The greatest expansion of Anglos in the state, for instance, occurred during its 1970s oil boom, when nearly one million people settled in Houston alone. But to attract today's high-tech migrants, the state is not simply relying on its traditional enticements—low cost of living, low taxes, minimal regulation, and an oil-rich substratum. The new migrants, according to conventional wisdom, demand a healthy environment and functioning social services. And this has led a growing number of Texans to challenge a prominent tenet of their state's secular religion: the unfaltering belief that development is always good, you can always use another highway, and there is always more land. Last year, in a highly publicized statewide poll, more than half the respondents named urban sprawl as a major concern. "This reflects a real change in Texas attitudes," state historian T. R. Fehrenbach told a local newspaper at the time. Previously, "it was practically considered Communistic to oppose growth."

Ground zero for this insurgency is Austin, where environmentalists routinely play kingmaker in city elections—this year, every candidate elected to the city council ran on an environmentally friendly platform. And today, after years of feuding, business groups (spurred by local high-tech leaders) have joined Greens to promote "smart growth" and improve the city's quality of life. According to Robin Rather, a former chairwoman of Save Our Springs (Austin's largest environmental organization) and currently head of a reform-minded alliance of high-tech CEOs, a local consensus is emerging that the imperatives of the market require some attention to environmental standards. "I think what we've proven is that if you cut through the rhetoric and look at what's in everybody's best interest, it's quality of life," she says. In fact, Save Our Springs has joined forces with the city's Chamber of Commerce and the Real Estate Council to buy 50,000 acres of open space in the nearby Hill Country, to protect the city's aquifer. "It's sort of an anti-sprawl measure," Rather suggests, a bit taken aback by the phrase.

STEVE McCRACKEN

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Texans, of course, have long viewed Austin as an exotic isle of liberalism, tolerated as if it were the older sister who cut her hair short and went off to Berkeley. But notions of smart growth are also catching on in Houston, a city whose name is practically synonymous with sprawl. Last April, Houston's environmentalists won a stunning victory over development titans when the city council voted down a proposal to build an airport on the Katy Prairie, a wildlife-rich wetland 30 miles outside the city. In the wake of the victory, environmentalists established a political action committee, Houston Conservation Voters, to push for clean air and open-space policies. The refineries and developers "are still in control," says Jim Blackburn, the PAC's director. "But there is certainly more willingness to discuss issues, and to be open to ideas, than I have previously seen in this part of the world."

The stats bear out Blackburn's wary optimism. According to Rice University's Klineberg, who has been polling Houstonians for nearly two decades, as many voters support spending city funds on inner-city mass transit as support funding highways to the suburbs, and they prefer investments in education and public services to tax cuts—both stark changes from the past. In 1999, 70 percent of those Klineberg polled supported emissions testing for all vehicles in Houston, up from 38 percent just four years earlier. And Houston's business community is finally catching on. This June, the city's largest business organization, the Greater Houston Partnership, officially came out in support of "sensible growth." Even Tom DeLay has taken notice. After the House majority whip, who represents the southwest Houston suburbs, shot down federal funding for an inner-city rail system, he received a significant number of complaints from his conservative constituents. "I think he was surprised by how much sentiment there was out there in the suburbs to quit just pouring concrete and think about new solutions," says Richard Murray, a political scientist at the University of Houston. This July, in a rare slap in the face to the third-highest-ranking congressional Republican, city officials chose to ignore DeLay's opposition and, if necessary, give up on federal funding and finance the rail project locally.

IF TEXAS'S HIGH-TECH migration is upsetting a long-held consensus on development and the environment, a broader migration is challenging long-standing stereotypes about the state's racial identity. For decades an unofficial demarcation, running from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, separated Texas's Hispanic south from its more Anglicized north, which was itself starkly divided between white and black. But in recent years a tide of Mexicanization has breached that divide, reshaping the political and cultural identities of the state's largest cities. Houston, for example, is now one of the most racially diverse cities in America—34 percent Hispanic, 31 percent white, 29 percent black, 6 percent Asian. Austin, too, is now more than one-quarter Hispanic, with a rapidly growing Asian community that includes a large population of Indian techies who left Silicon Valley, lured by Austin's cheaper rents and multicultural vibrancy. In fact, at current growth rates, in 20 years Asians will surpass blacks as Austin's second-largest minority. Even Dallas, epicenter of good-old-boyism, is now nearly one-quarter Hispanic. And, according to census projections, that number will reach 40 percent in 30 years.

MORE IMPRESSIVE THAN the ethnic diversification itself is that Texas has experienced it without much of the violence and antagonism that has plagued its supposedly more liberal counterpart, California. The Lone Star State has produced no successful Proposition 187-style campaigns to restrict the rights and benefits of immigrants, and politicians hostile to the largely Hispanic immigrant community frequently suffer at the polls. For instance, after Jim Mattox, a former state attorney general and front-runner for the Democratic senatorial spot in 1994, suggested using the military to patrol the border, his campaign plummeted. When Bush ran for governor, by contrast, he made a point of signaling to voters that he supported immigration and considered Texas's relationship with Mexico one of the state's most valuable assets. Bush won in 1994 "because he wasn't Pete Wilson," says Andrew Hernandez, author of the *Almanac of Latino Politics*, referring to the California governor who championed Prop 187. "He got credit for saying, 'We are not that kind of state.'"

This isn't to say Texas is always racially enlightened. The state's shamefully decrepit criminal justice system leaves many poor black and Hispanic defendants without competent counsel. Texas still witnesses spasms of racial violence—the brutal dragging death of Jasper resident James Byrd two years ago being among the most terrifying. In parts of East Texas, the tolerance enjoyed by Texas Latinos is often denied to African Americans; and in the border regions the poverty and dropout rates among Tejanos remain much higher than the statewide averages. For the most part, however, race relations in Texas confound the traditional liberal paradigm of a white majority oppressing a brown or black underclass. The state's supposedly reactionary business elite, for instance, has largely accepted multiculturalism as a way of life. Houston and Dallas, neither of which has a black majority, both recently elected black mayors, and they did so without much of the racial hostility that accompanied similar breakthroughs in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York. "There is an understanding that the future is increasingly a non-Anglo future," notes Klineberg, "an understanding that if you're going to make money in the twenty-first century, you're going to have to make coalitions."

One reason for the absence of ethnic vendettas is that in Texas, Hispanic and Anglo culture are more deeply intertwined than in California or even New York. "Texas Latinos are more likely to be multigenerational Americans and have greater distance from the immigrant experience than do their counterparts in California," writes Gregory Rodriguez, a fellow at the New America Foundation, a Washington, D.C., think tank. Three years ago, when a town across the border from El Paso hoisted a gigantic Mexican flag and the local paper polled residents about whether it should plant an American flag in response, a greater percentage of Hispanics than non-Hispanics said yes.

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And if Hispanic Texans don't see a contradiction between being culturally Mexican and fully American, neither, it seems, do the state's Anglos. Unlike in California, Texas's white politicians have never crusaded against bilingual education; George W. explicitly supports it. In fact, in more than 30 districts—from El Paso to Dallas to Houston—schools encourage "two-way" bilingualism so that Anglo students can also gain proficiency in Spanish. According to Josefina V. Tinajero, president of the National Association for Bilingual Education, attitudes toward bilingual education in California are hampered by a sort of liberal paternalism, which she describes as a "let's help these poor little kids who don't speak English" attitude. In Texas, on the other hand, where more than 70 percent of all English-as-a-second-language elementary school students are educated in both Spanish and English, compared to just 30 percent in California, bilingualism is considered "an asset ... an intellectual accomplishment," and a wise business investment. She points to a partnership between the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and the city's school districts to ensure that all high school graduates are fluent in both languages. "From an economic point of view," Tinajero says, "the leadership in Texas has seen that bilingual education is good for our kids."

BUT PROGNOSTICATORS WHO expect that Texas's "sleeping giant" Hispanic population will usher in an era of Lone Star liberalism when Hispanics become a plurality of the state's population (expected by 2025) are probably deluding themselves. Texas, unlike California, boasts a Hispanic Republican congressman and a Hispanic Republican state official. And even many Hispanic Democrats, like El Paso's law-and-order, pro-life Representative Silvestre Reyes, hold political views far to the right of national Latino advocacy groups like the National Council of La Raza.

But if one explanation for Texas's lack of a white backlash is the political moderation of its Hispanic population, another is the underappreciated moderation of its white population as well. In fact, despite the high-profile antics of the state's Republican Party, whose recent platform demanded the abolition of the IRS and the Federal Reserve, there is substantial evidence that, on a host of social issues, Texans are not much more conservative than the nation as a whole. According to a March Scripps Howard Texas Poll, 44 percent of Texans consider themselves pro-choice, while 46 percent lean pro-life (the national figures, according to a March Gallup Poll, are 48 percent pro-choice, 43 percent pro-life). And, according to statewide polling by Rice's Klineberg, nearly half of all Texans believe that "government should do more to solve our country's problems" and that homosexuals should be granted equal civil rights. For years, writes Rice sociologist Chandler Davidson, Texas has suffered from a "myth of overwhelming conservatism," encouraged by hard-right politicians who "self-servingly portray themselves as spokesman for a homogenous conservative population." But now, despite the Gore camp's best intentions, that myth, like the 25,000 abandoned oil wells that litter the state, might finally run dry.

Or maybe not. Because it's not just the presidential candidates who seem determined to wrap Texas in outdated caricatures; so do many Texans themselves. Dallas residents might complain about the unfair portrayal of their city as a gaudy boomtown and tout their cosmopolitan art scene. But in the next breath they'll proudly advertise their city's second-largest tourist attraction: Southfork, the ranch from the TV show "Dallas," which celebrates exactly the image they claim to loathe. And linguists have recently discovered that the much-maligned Lone Star drawl correlates not so much with geographic location or time spent in the state as with positive feelings about Texas. A 1993 statewide poll found that more than 60 percent of Texans believed themselves to be "particularly unique" compared with other Americans.

IRONICALLY, TEXANS HAVE historically promoted their state's cultural uniqueness so strenuously precisely because of its lack of true unity and cohesion. In the nineteenth century, the legends of the cowboy (appropriated from eighteenth-century northern Mexican folk culture) and the Alamo held together a fragile coalition of five ministates, each with its peculiar culture, topography, and climate. (The annexation treaty of 1845, which incorporated Texas into the Union, included a provision allowing the state to splinter into those five regions if it chose to do so.) Politicians, in particular, have burnished the old myths to stoke Texas chauvinism and unite the populace. Lyndon Johnson, for instance, used the image of the spirited rancher to transcend his Germanic, peach-farming, central Texas origins and broaden his appeal to the entire state. And, once Johnson became president, the national press eagerly bought into the stereotype he and his Texas constituents had worked so hard to create. If, along with self-sufficiency, entrepreneurial savvy, and bravado, that stereotype included buffoonery, anti-intellectualism, and violence, LBJ and the rest of the state seemed happy with the bargain. They would take the bad rap if they could keep the swagger.

And today's Texans, no matter how much they change their state's reality, seem just as happy with the deal. Back in May, Bush admitted to *U.S. News & World Report* that, compared to "bigger-than-life characters" like LBJ and John Connally, he represented "the newer Texas," someone who didn't "fill the screen quite as big." But then there he was, in that convention film, leading a camera crew in his pickup truck around the site of his future ranch, singing Midland's praises. How ironic, since few Texas cities have done a worse job of adapting to the state's new realities. Midland, which once boasted one of the highest per capita rates of millionaires in the nation, has proved unable to tap into Texas's high-tech boom and is now an economic disaster; last year the city's unemployment rate reached 9 percent. In April, town elders invited Tyler Mayor Eltife to come explain how he turned his East Texas town around.

It is Tyler, not Midland, that represents the real story of "entrepreneurial pioneers" and Texas optimism—a story about how the state revived itself by becoming more like the rest of America. Yet each presidential candidate, for his own, very different reason, seems determined to bury it. And the people of Texas appear happy to play along. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Trying to Understand

FILM SCHOLARS HAVE their work cut out for them—it has probably begun already—with Akira Kurosawa. Like great masters in other arts, Kurosawa is not "better than" others in his field: he is, at his best, incomparable. (Mozart is not "better than" Boccherini: he is a different order of being.) But when such a master does work below his best level, even below his second-best, it is almost frightening, as if the structure of the cosmos had been shaken. Sometimes such a sag comes early in an artist's career, when one can recognize the process of growth. With Kurosawa, however, his three weakest films come at the end of his career. The latest is his last, **Madadayo** (Winstar), and its feebleness is upsetting.

In 1985, when Kurosawa was 75, he made *Ran*, and said it was his last film. Yet before he died thirteen years later, he made three more films, *Dreams*, *Rhapsody in August*, and this one. Obviously, whatever one's opinion of those three, it is impossible to wish that he had kept his word. Still, his admirers are left with the job of relating those films to the greatness with which Kurosawa blessed the film art. The following is my failure at this job in regard to *Madadayo*.

Kurosawa's screenplay is based on the life of Hyakken Uchida, who was a professor of German in Tokyo and who, in 1943 at the age of 60, retired from teaching to devote himself to writing. In the film some of his former students, now men in the world, give him a birthday dinner to help mark that choice. Part of the party fun is the group's question en masse: *Mahdakai*? (Are you ready?)—to leave for the other world; and his reply: "*Madadayo*" (Not yet). We're not told if this cheery exchange is usual at Japanese birthday parties for older folk.

After an air-raid bomb burns the professor's house, he and his wife move into a shack. They lose their cat, and he is grief-stricken, so his former students absent themselves from their jobs to search for the cat. Then the students finance a grand residence for him and his wife. When he is 77 and is at the annual birthday dinner given by the students, he supplies the ritual answer (*Madadayo*) to the ritual question, then collapses and is taken home. Students wait in the next room, and he calls in to them, *Madadayo*. (The real Uchida died in 1971.)

The details about the professor and his former students may be factual, but they are puzzling. All through the film these ex-students lavish gratitude on the professor for what he taught them. This gratitude, and the time they devote to him, and the house they build for him, are difficult to understand: all he did was teach them a foreign language that, as far as we can see, they never use.

But these are the least of the questions we are left with. Only one previous Kurosawa film that I know, *Dodesukaden* (1970), about slum dwellers, has anything like the sentimentality of *Madadayo*, and at least that earlier work has striking visual elements. *Madadayo* has no touch of originality or uniqueness in the way it is seen and edited. Further, the acting is entirely commonplace, which is not the case with other Kurosawa films. If the late Takashi Shimura (of *Ikiru*) had been on hand to play the professor, his truth as actor might have given some strength to the general flabbiness here. Tatsuo Matsumura in the role is ineffective.

It would be pointless to speculate on Kurosawa's reasons for making *Madadayo*. In any case, here I go. I can see only two Kurosawa elements in it. First, he wanted to show how Japanese social values survived in wartime. Second, he wanted to explore further his recurrent interest in master-and-student relationships, such as the doctor and the gangster in *Drunken Angel*, the older samurai and the younger ones in *Seven Samurai*, the older doctor and the younger one in *Red Beard*.

But this is to grasp at straws. And to be left with straws. The worst of it is that those who see this film with no knowledge of Kurosawa may be put off from discovering that he is a titan.

Another puzzle. Neil LaBute is the coolly talented, (relatively) young American who wrote and directed *In the Company of Men* and *Your Friends and Neighbors*, two pungent, clear-eyed, merciless films about contemporary mores, especially sexual ones. (I've also seen LaBute's *Bash*, a bill of three one-act plays—he calls them "latter-day" plays—that are circuitously stark.) Now LaBute has directed **Nurse Betty** (USA), which he did not write: the authors are John C. Richards and James Flamberg. It is fairly easy to see why LaBute was interested in the screenplay; it is very hard to see why he didn't ask more questions of it.

The idea is inviting in the abstract: to open a story realistically and then to make it metamorphose past verism into grotesquerie, black comedy, absurdity, and satire. Fine, in principle. But the authors give us no means of accompanying the heroine as she moves through all these modes. Betty is a waitress in a California diner who is wonderstruck by a hospital soap opera. She adores the TV doctor-hero, who is contrasted with her vulgar car-salesman husband. One evening Charlie and Wesley, a black father and son, visit her home, scalp (yes, scalp) and shoot her husband while she is watching TV in the next room. Through a crack in the door she sees what is going on but does absolutely nothing about it because it would interrupt her viewing of the soap. This is where the film stops being a satire. Betty ceases to be a soap-opera fan, at whose soppiness we can smile: she is so completely in denial of reality that she is pathological, a mental case, not a figure of fun. (The fact that the filmmakers understand her mental state only makes it worse.)

This estrangement from reality persists as she flees in one of her husband's cars, goes to Los Angeles, meets the cast of the soap-opera, and insists on treating the actor of the doctor as if he were in fact the doctor. Charlie and Wesley pursue Betty because—I think I have this right—they are drug dealers and, unknown to her, there is a stash in the trunk of the car she has taken from her husband's lot. (Also unknown to her, her husband was in the drug business.) A shoot-out at the end helps to tie up the plot—or to truss it.

Lately there have been films, *EdTV* and *The Truman Show*, that explored the narrow border between life and the media, but no one in those films thought that the two sides of the border were indistinguishable. Any amusement at Betty's TV infatuation, any empathy with the consequent involvements, is paralyzed by her blatant pathology—and by the film's exploitation of it.

Renée Zellweger screws up her face so cutely all through the picture, in an attempt to be winningly naïve, that she

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Presenting the Past

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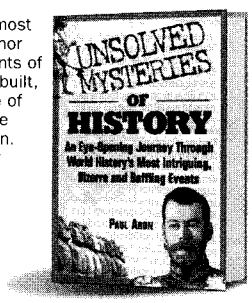
by Paul Aron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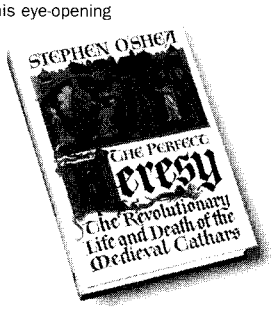

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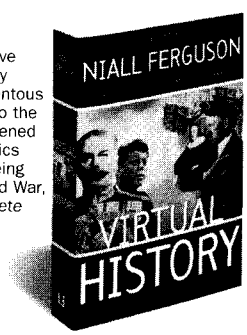

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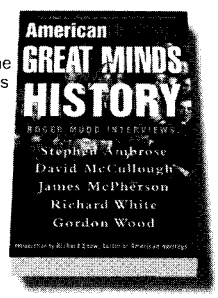

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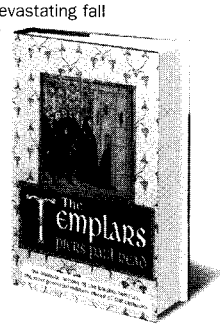

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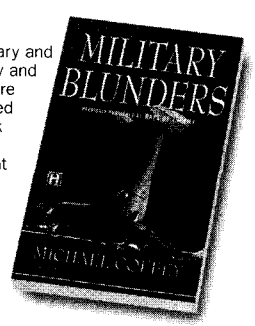

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is more fake than the soap opera. (I can't concede that this may be the point of her performance.) Morgan Freeman, splendid actor, wastes his time as Charlie; with Chris Rock, the TV comic who plays Wesley, it doesn't matter. Greg Kinnear, as the TV star, is skilled at small-scale face-making

LaBute's directing is clean enough, though he leans a bit much on big close-ups. But he needs more soundly conceived material—by N. LaBute. ■

Robert Brustein on Theater

Millennial Blues

JUST AS THE approach of a millennium can inspire fears about the end of the world, so the successful passing of such a dire date would seem to augur a cloud-free future. But the first half of the year 2000 has seemed to be less about new beginnings than about sad endings. Aside from the disappointments of a variety of peace accords, the year has been conspicuous for the passing of many distinguished individuals. Is it my imagination or are we seeing more of these deaths than usual, as if people had been waiting to celebrate the millennium before letting go of life?

The theater in particular has been hit hard. John Gielgud and Alec Guinness died within weeks of each other. They were two of the greatest actors of the past century and the last remaining knights of the Arthurian age of British theater, after the passing of Laurence Olivier, Ralph Richardson, and Michael Redgrave. In their advanced years, neither of them appeared very often on stage; but it is still a shock to realize that we will never hear the sounds of Gielgud's melancholy bassoon or Guinness's sensible English horn reverberating through an auditorium again.

Not least because of the loss of irreplaceable artists such as these, some people are coming to believe that the theater is passing, too, as a vital force in everyday life. To be sure, the commercial stage has just enjoyed the most prosperous season in its history: instead of losing performance spaces to retail shops as in the past, Broadway has been redecorating 42nd Street with a bunch of new theater buildings. But those predicting the death of the theater (and such prophets have always been with us) are not likely to be swayed from their opinion by a manufactured brand of entertainment that caters almost exclusively to out-of-town tourists, foreign businessmen, and ten-year-old children.

Nor would they find much consolation in the products of the non-profit theaters, which, following a critical decrease in contributed income from government sources and private foundations, have been growing almost indistinguishable from Broadway (and off-Broadway) in their dependence on the box office and in the lowered ambitions of their work. At the beginning of this movement, it was possible to believe that every American community would soon have its own indigenous theater, rather like those jewel boxes one finds in Italian towns such as Cervia and Cesenetica, to which the villagers flock regularly before pouring into the square to argue about the play. And there is no disputing the fact that since the 1960s the resident theater movement has produced most of the interesting new plays and almost all of the significant classical revivals to be seen in the nation. Many of these new plays—beginning with the transfer of *The Great White Hope* from the Arena Stage—found their way to Broadway to begin the longer life that they deserved.

Yet this transfer process was a far cry from the current fashion among non-profit companies of accepting "enhancement money" to try out Broadway musicals for commercial producers, or naming their theaters after corporate sponsors such as American Airlines. What we are seeing these days is, more precisely, the theatrical version of the hostile takeover. "Englut and devour"—the name that Mel Brooks once invented for a Hollywood studio—is becoming the motto of the American stage.

The triumph of American commercialism is hardly a novelty of the millennium. What is different today is the lack of any indignation about it. It seems almost quixotic these days to criticize the relationship between art and commerce, and a little nostalgic even to try to evoke any interest in the question. And yet this tension has been one of the prevailing themes of American drama throughout the twentieth century. Eugene O'Neill in particular was obsessed by it. In a sense, all of his plays are (often crude) variations on the theme—from *The Great God Brown*, a parable about the way the business ethic and the creative spirit collide, to *A Long Day's Journey Into Night*, in which James Tyrone pauses to wonder why he abandoned a promising career as a Shakespearean actor in order to make his pile in a cheap touring show ("What was it I wanted to buy?"). And there is also that huge unfinished eight-play historical cycle with which O'Neill intended to dramatize the growing surrender of the American spirit to greed and materialism.

It was a subject picked up by Clifford Odets in *Awake and Sing* and then again in *Golden Boy*, when Joe Bonaparte gives up a promising career as a violinist in order to make his fortune as a prize fighter. Arthur Miller created variations on the theme in *All My Sons* and in *Death of a Salesman*, with Willy Loman finding more creative satisfaction in building his front stoop than in a lifetime of salesmanship. And it pervades the biographies and the memoirs of countless other theater artists of the 1930s and 1940s (*pace* Harold Clurman's *The Fervent Years*), some of them victims of the very material seductions they were trying to describe.

One of the great appeals of the American theater has been that, unlike dance or opera, it often marries the highest and lowest forms of expression: Beckett and Bert Lahr, Ionesco and Zero Mostel, Shakespeare (and Shakespeare), Brecht (and Brecht). But the corollary of this marriage is that the American theater also suffers from the very tensions and concessions that are embodied in its structure and expressed in its subject matter. Indeed, it is ironic that the growing deterioration of high culture in this country—collapsing as it seems to be under the economic claims of capitalism and the social pressures of multi-culturalism—should feature as one of its principal victims such a compromised form as the theater.

One reason is that theater artists are so vulnerable to the lure of the marketplace. It would be highly unusual to find a ballet dancer pulled out of her company for a sit-com series or an opera singer offered a Hollywood contract. (Mario Lanza was the last.) Yet these temptations await not only stage actors, but also directors, designers, and playwrights all the time. Anyone training for a career in the theater

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these days knows that Hollywood will probably be an eventual destination, since that is where the work, the fame, and the money are most easily found.

To choose this route is not as easy as it seems. Some of the most passionate advocates of theater have often been those who eventually had to abandon it. Most theater artists were originally attracted to the stage not just for reasons of ego, but also out of a sense of idealism. It is one of the few professions left in our society (teaching used to be another) that allows the possibility of pursuing a worthy goal with like-minded people. I respect the romance of business, but how many other industries can offer similar personal fulfillment in addition to their stock options and Christmas bonuses? It is partly to disguise the absence of creative satisfactions that our ravenous market economy, which now has people working sometimes twelve to fourteen hours a day in defiance of labor laws, has been making such a fetish of consumer goods in place of the spiritual enticements of the past.

Another threat to the future of theater is the advance of technology. Recently I listened to a brilliant friend of mine, a sometime patron of the performing arts, insist that internet technology would soon make all live performance obsolete. (It is already beginning to do the same to publishing.) Before long, he theorized, we would be able to stream anything we wished onto our computers—plays, concerts, dance, and opera, with the performance enhanced by high-definition, even three-dimensional, television and brilliant acoustical devices. This, he argued, would obviate the annoyance of having to leave the house and make one's way through noisy crowds to a theater.

I was as chilled by the idea as he was excited by it. It is not just that the appetite for live theater in this country has been evaporating, or that theater-going is no longer an essential part of everyday life. What is also disappearing is the desire for human contact. Aside from places of worship, how many spots are there left for us to congregate in? Yes, there will always be massive sports events and rock concerts, but even these are more conveniently witnessed on the home screen in the safety of the living room. If not the theater and the other performing arts, what offerings will be able to lure us away from our home entertainment centers to mix with others of our species?

If we lose this capacity to jostle and to scramble, to encounter and to connect, the future of this provisional art form will be very dark indeed. One thing that will help to preserve the theater is the passion and the obstinacy of the people who still continue to labor in the field. I have known playwrights who, without having had a production in many years, continue to grind out scripts. I have known actors undiscouraged by years of relative unemployment, and directors eager to work even under the most onerous conditions. Of course, these artists cannot create in a vacuum. What they need are great spirits on the other side of the stage. As Clurman wrote about his own precarious Group Theater, after it succumbed to Hollywood defections and box office failure: "For a group to live a healthy life and mature to a full consummation of its potentiality, it must be sustained by other groups—not only of moneyed men or civic support, but by equally conscious groups in the press, in the audience, and generally in large and comparatively stable elements of society. When this fails to happen, regardless of its spirit or capacities, it will wither." Clurman was not speaking of isolated sects but of unified assemblies. Walt Whitman put it more succinctly: "Great poets need great audiences." If all those dire millenarian prophecies are to be proven wrong, we need to rediscover how to congregate comfortably in intelligent, mutually supportive groups, how to understand that an audience, too, must aspire to greatness. ■

Believe Your Doctor

By SHERWIN B. NULAND

The Rise and Fall of Modern Medicine by James Le Fanu

(Carroll and Graf, 426 pp., $26)

I.

UNTIL SCARCELY TWO hundred years ago, admirals conducting warfare on distant seas were accustomed to losing more men to scurvy than to battle. After prolonged periods aboard ship, sailors would often begin to exhibit lassitude and depression, followed after a time by swollen gums and joints, frequent bruising and bleeding into the mouth. If the voyage was long enough, hemorrhages might occur into body cavities, and then heart failure would lead to death.

The disease was ascribed to various causes, ranging from the effect of climate or salt air to the existence of some deficiency in the diet. There was little agreement on therapies, although a few of those that included certain ingredients added to the daily rations seemed to have some degree of efficacy. In May 1747, James Lind, the ship's surgeon of HMS *Salisbury*, chose twelve sailors who were in sick bay with weakness and swollen gums, and divided them into six groups. His intent was to test the most commonly recommended dietary additives against one another.

For a trial period of fourteen days, each twosome received one of the six remedies that were thought to be most useful. They were, respectively, one quart of cider daily; twenty-five drops of elixir of vitriol three times a day; two spoonfuls of vinegar three times a day; one half-pint of seawater daily; two oranges and one lemon daily; and an elixer made of garlic, mustard seed, horseradish, Peruvian balsam, barley water, tamarinds and cream of tartar three times daily. Of the treatments, the citrus fruits gave by far the best results. One of the sailors who ingested them was fit for duty at the end of six days, and the other became well enough to help with the care of the rest of the sick. At the conclusion of the two weeks of trial, none of the remaining patients so much as approached such salubrious outcomes, and most of them had shown little or no improvement.

Even after Lind wrote a book on the subject in 1772, two decades more would pass before his recommendations to dispense citrus fruits and their juices to all sailors were heeded. It was not until 1795 that the practice was made universal on all British ships, with the result that scurvy was finally obliterated from the nation's navy and the citizens of the sceptered isle became forever after known as limeys. Lind had conducted the first of a type of experiment that would two centuries later become known as a controlled clinical trial.

Under actual conditions of disease (and using real patients), Lind had tested several therapeutic methods and demonstrated that one of them was clearly superior to the rest. A few other clinical trials would be done before modern

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times—most notably the one reported by the French physician Pierre Louis in 1835, showing that bloodletting was ineffective against pneumonia. But the method did not come into general use until after the late 1940s, when it was successfully employed to evaluate the efficacy of the anti-tubercular drugs streptomycin and para-amino salicylic acid. Those trials established not only the remarkable usefulness of the two pharmacologic agents, but also the concept that well-planned clinical studies involving large numbers of patients are critical to the understanding of disease and its treatment.

Louis, who called his approach *la méthode numérique*, is widely credited with bringing statistical techniques into the scientific investigation of disease. But it was the tuberculosis studies that ultimately convinced academic physicians that a properly used controlled clinical trial was the indispensible way to make sense of the often conflicting mass of information to which doctors in practice are exposed. The word "randomized" became associated with it, to indicate that no bias was to be used in the assignment of patients to one or another of the treatments being tested.

If, for example, one therapy is being compared with a second, patients are entered alternately into each group as they come for treatment. In evaluating drugs, it is often possible to conduct the experiment without the patient knowing to which arm of the project he is assigned. This is called a "blind" or "blinded" study. When neither patient nor analyzing researcher knows the arm, the term "double blind" is used. In theory, at least, a double-blind randomized controlled trial should represent the *sine qua non* of scientific objectivity in the clinical assessment of pharmacological agents.

The uses of the randomized clinical trial are hardly restricted to the study of drug efficacy alone. In recent years, they—and the statistical methods upon which they are based—have become important tools to evaluate the role of certain environmental or biochemical factors in the health of large populations. At the same time, enormous progress has been made in the science of statistics, so that population studies can be utilized with ever-increasing reliability to reveal new information and determine the significance of observed trends, and indict factors that might otherwise escape detection.

Using such studies, the field of epidemiology has vastly expanded from a discipline devoted, as its name implies, to the study of epidemics and infectious disease patterns, into a wide panorama of investigations involving a multiplicity of the parameters of health and its maintenance. It is to the use of epidemiological techniques that we owe our recent awareness, for example, of the effect of personal habits—what we call lifestyle—on the condition of our bodies. Our relatively new knowledge ranges from such certainties as the positive correlation between smoking and lung cancer all along the spectrum toward factors whose effects are far less well documented, such as the decrease in the incidence of depression among those who take part in frequent physical exercise.

II.

Yet statistical methods are only as dependable as the researchers who use them. Flaws in the design of a study or in its analysis can lead to erroneous conclusions that then bear the imprimatur of seemingly objective statistical proof. Thus, it has been "shown" that drinking coffee and Coke can lead to pancreatic and bladder cancer respectively, and that eating a diet high in animal fat will cause heart attacks.

Whoa, says the careful reader of each Tuesday's Science *Times*, or of the *Harvard Health Letter*. How can discredited studies such as those involving coffee and Coke be mentioned in the same sentence as a well-documented statement like the one about fat and coronary heart disease? Surely, if we know anything about the causes of heart disease, it is that the ingestion of high-fat foods results in an elevated level of cholesterol in the blood, which in turn is the cause of coronary attacks.

James Le Fanu is far less sure of such things than are the editors of the periodicals, the commentators on radio and television, and the authors of the books from which so much of the public gets its information. He does not believe that eating more fat causes more heart disease, nor does he trust doctors who say so, especially those whose statistical research purports to prove it. And he has no use for epidemiologists: "The simple expedient of closing down most university departments of epidemiology could both extinguish this endlessly fertile source of anxiety-mongering while simultaneously releasing funds for serious research." Readers addicted to precise sentences may not forgive Le Fanu his use of "while" for "and," but they will have to put up with such minor annoyances if they are to follow his argument through its provocative 426 pages.

Unfortunately, they will also have to put up with much more that is aggravating, for this is a book filled with small factual errata, repeated misspellings, and other inaccuracies in the names of institutions and well-known people, and a fierce determination to make its point, even if some exaggeration is required to do it.

Add to the aggravations Le Fanu's maddening habit of spotlighting the statistics that support his case and ignoring those that do not. Despite his vitriolic attacks on the epidemiologists, he does not hesitate to quote their results when they come out his way.

And yet this book has been produced by a respected science writer with a profound insight into the history and conundrums of twentieth-century biomedicine. Le Fanu has a very important message for those who unthinkingly accept current dogma about the causes of disease and some of the ways in which individuals can influence them by how they live their lives. And the message should be heard also by everyone who believes that there is any real certainty in the practice of medicine.

It is in recounting the history that Le Fanu is at his best. His thesis is that the great medical innovations of the twentieth century took place between the 1940s and the late 1970s, followed by a marked decline since then. Though the past two decades have been characterized by enormous strides in the laboratory and in statistical methods of studying disease, it is Le Fanu's assertion that little of therapeutic value has yet emerged. The title of his book is based on his panoramic perspective that medical researchers are leading themselves and patients astray by focusing their efforts on areas that are unlikely to be productive or are deceptive in their appearance of validity.

Physicians have been seduced, in Le Fanu's view, by the siren calls of the research emanating from basic science laboratories. And they have also been seduced by a concept that he calls The Social Theory. This latter is the notion that the most important reason why people become sick is that they indulge themselves in unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking, eating an improper diet, not getting enough exercise, and making the mistake of being poor. If they did not give in to such temptations, according to The Social Theory, the great majority of people would remain perfectly well right on into a vibrant old age. So it is nurture and not nature that is at fault; and self-nurture at that. Except for the proven relationship of cigarettes to lung cancer, Le Fanu rejects all of this, including the virtually self-evident effect of poverty on health. He means to shock, and he succeeds.

Le Fanu has divided his book into two almost equal halves: the first in which he describes The Rise that ended around 1980, and the second in which he writes of The Fall. Those readers unfamiliar with

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the extraordinary development of clinical science after World War II will be engrossed by the story of The Rise for its well-crafted tales of medical accomplishment, and its character sketches of some of the leading figures in the effort. Those who know somewhat more about these things will find details with which they have probably not been familiar. This is no superficial run-through.

But Le Fanu's account of The Fall is something else entirely. Here he takes on two of the most basic assumptions of the new medicine, and uses them to illustrate his iconoclastic thesis. One is the notion that the dogma he calls The New Genetics is the next frontier, destined to do for medical therapeutics what antibiotics did when they came upon the scene half a century ago. The other is the wide-spread belief that regulating the amount of fat in the diet will prevent coronary heart disease. He trashes them both.

One cannot avoid the paradoxical impression that LeFanu wrote his book in a great hurry, though he probably spent years earnestly studying his subject and forming his opinions. His is not a shallow understanding or a shallow mastery of a large amount of unrelated data. He is, in fact, a philosopher of a sort, but one in such a hot-tempered fervor to write it all down that he tramples on the details in order to paint the big picture. And even the big picture, as valid as much of it is, is distorted by the righteous indignation of its artist.

The American publication of *The Rise and Fall of Modern Medicine* will enrage some readers, astonish many more, and be greeted by a few with some such thought as, "It's about time someone said this." Le Fanu is well-known in England, where the book first appeared a year ago. He writes a weekly medical column for the *Telegraph*, and his articles have appeared in a variety of newspapers and magazines. He knows whereof he writes—up to a point.

III.

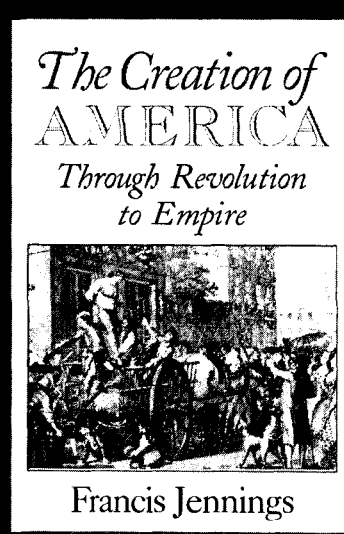
LE FANU'S PRIMARY argument against the effects of a high fat diet is largely theoretical, and rests on the existence of a balancing mechanism within all multicellular organisms. Named the *milieu intérieur* by Claude Bernard, the nineteenth-century physiologist who first described it, this consists of a ubiquitous chemical-rich fluid in which all the cells of the body are bathed. The fluid and its ingredients are so responsive to even minute changes from within (the cell) and without (the environment) that it immediately acts to restore equilibrium when some new, noxious influence makes its appearance. By numerous feedback mechanisms, the *milieu intérieur* maintains the steady state required for healthy cellular life. Le Fanu argues, and correctly, that only massive attacks on the integrity of this extracellular fluid can disrupt the harmonious balance that is thus maintained within the body. By his reasoning, raising the dietary intake of fat only mobilizes the *milieu intérieur* to do what is necessary to keep the blood content of cholesterol at a steady level.

As one proof of the resistance of the body to external influences, and to support his thesis that there is little cardiac significance in the amount of fat ingested, Le Fanu cites the massive multinational study—it involved more than 60,000 men—done in the 1970's and called the Multiple Risk Intervention Factor Trial (MRFIT). Great efforts were made to induce these men to reduce their intake of saturated fat, in order to lower cholesterol levels. The outcome was disappointing to the researchers, but it was apparently no surprise to Le Fanu, at least in retrospect: "These prodigious efforts were rewarded, the average amount of saturated fat in their diet fell by about a quarter, but disappointingly—if predictably because of the *milieu intérieur* already alluded to—their cholesterol level only fell by just over 5 percent.".

Although LeFanu seems not to have noticed it, the very name of the MRFIT is a metaphor of sorts for a major theme of his book, and perhaps for its entire thesis. The proponents of The New Genetics believe that biomedical science stands on the verge of an era in which various forms of genetic manipulation will provide panaceas for a wide range of diseases; the proponents of The Social Theory believe that the paramount reason that people become ill is their style of life. Le Fanu summarizes the thinking that led to this latter conclusion, or at least his interpretation of it:

> The great appeal of The Social Theory is not just that it provides an explanation for disease, but also opens the way to preventing them [sic].... [T]here would be no need for most drugs and treatments were it possible to identify why people became ill in the first place and prevent their diseases in a similar manner. The problem was that up until the mid-1970s no one seemed to know what these other causes of disease might be. And then suddenly it seemed as if this ignorance was being swept away as, with increasing certainty, it was claimed they lay simply in people's lives and that most cancers, not to mention strokes and heart attacks, could be prevented by people changing their social habits in precisely the same way that lung cancer could be prevented by stopping smoking.

New from Cambridge



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In other words, if every man could be persuaded to change his habits in an appropriate manner, he would become Mr. Fit, and unlikely to fall victim to the many sicknesses that he incurs by his present way of living. This is, of course, a significant overstatement of the present viewpoint of most medical authorities, but it serves Le Fanu well in his attack on those who are committed to any part of it. In pursuing that attack, he provides important information that will probably be new to the general reader—and which has been overlooked or ignored by many physicians.

YET IT IS in the analysis of that information that Le Fanu reveals his bias, and shows himself to be guilty of the sin of which he accuses others: forcing the evidence into conformation with his predetermined conclusion. Sometimes this comes about because he deliberately misrepresents the claims of those he would bring down, as when he insists that they "argue that most common diseases are *caused* by an 'unhealthy' lifestyle" [italics mine]. But elsewhere it can be attributed to faulty comprehension of just what it is that the other side is talking about. There is a vast difference between asserting that lifestyle is a contributory factor—which is what most authorities claim—and calling it a cause.

Le Fanu's campaign against The New Genetics is based on a misunderstanding of the role of genes in disease. As evidence for his skepticism that genetic manipulation will ever be of much value in clinical medicine, he cites the fact that "there are approximately 4,000 diseases resulting from a defect in just one gene [elsewhere he gives the figure as 5,000]—the so-called single gene disorders. Luckily they are all very rare, except for a handful including Huntington's Chorea, cystic fibrosis and the congenital blood disorders such as sickle cell anemia." Moreover, "the genes themselves turn out to be infinitely more complex than could ever have been imagined... Sickle cell anemia turns out to be virtually unique in the simple nature of its genetic defect". And finally comes the ultimate summing up of his argument against the promise of The New Genetics:

> Genetics is not a particularly significant factor in human disease. This is scarcely surprising, as man would not be as successful a species as he is (many would argue too successful), were it not that natural selection had over millions of years weeded out the unfit. Consequently there are only a handful of common gene disorders and they themselves are not very common. Further, the contribution of genetics to adult disease such as cancer is limited to a minority of cases and for everybody else it is almost invariably only one of several factors, of which the most important is ageing, an everyday fact of life about which there is not much that can be done.

Try telling such a thing to a 60-year-old diabetic with a strong family history of the disease, or to a 45-year-old man who has had, like his father and older brother before him, a second coronary occlusion—or to me, among whose close relatives colon cancer keeps appearing, even without the presence of the specific gene that has been shown to be associated with the malignancy in a small minority of families. Le Fanu is simply, factually wrong: DNA is a contributor to many common pathologies other than those induced by a single gene, and in varying degrees can influence not only onset but also the course of a disease.

I AM NOT claiming that developing genetic therapies will be easy, or that they will necessarily revolutionize medicine in the next decade. The genetic contribution to disease is extraordinarily complex. To begin with, it comes not from one source but many. Genetically influenced diseases will probably all eventually be proven to be "oligogenic," which means that the hereditary component is mediated not by one but by many contributing bits of DNA at different sites on the chromosomes, all having differing degrees of effect on the eventual expression of the pathology and all interacting with numerous other factors. And so gene therapy may not revolutionize medicine at all.

Yet surely it will suffice if a significant improvement occurs in our ability to prevent only some of the common pathologies. Even if the percentage of patients involved is relatively low, the absolute number of people affected would be enormous. My confidence that solutions will be found comes from the history of late-twentieth-century science, which has again and again proven itself equal to tasks at first thought to be overwhelming and impossible to accomplish. Witness the Human Genome Project itself; witness the advances hailed by Le Fanu as "The Twelve Definitive Moments of Modern Medicine."

Pathologies such as diabetes, coronary arteriosclerosis, and colon cancer may not be "the so-called single-gene disorders," but without the input of the genetic predisposition, the other contributory factors would not add up to the full panorama of ingredients required to cause them. I hope Le Fanu endures to see the day when appropriate gene therapies are in regular use to decrease the likelihood that the potential diabetic, the young worrier over his father's early cardiac death, and my grandchildren will have to live under the sword of Damocles in their DNA. Perhaps he might then be embarrassed to be reminded that years earlier he instructed the readers of his book that gene therapy is "not only expensive but useless."

One need not necessarily agree—a least not yet—with one of gene therapy's pioneers, W. French Anderson of the University of California, that within the next few decades "virtually every disease will have gene therapy as one of its components," but the hiccoughs and tribulations of its beginning stages should not delude anyone into thinking that such research will lead to a clinical blind alley. Gene therapy and the development of stem cell techniques are among the avenues of research that hold the most promise of heralding yet another Rise of Modern Medicine, similar to the one that Le Fanu so accurately describes in the first part of his book. Were investigators and clinicians as easily discouraged as he seems to be, we would never have had the benefits of open heart surgery, the cure of childhood cancer, and organ transplantation, three of the advances that he includes among those "Twelve Definitive Moments." Each of them took decades to develop, and a long preliminary series of failures and aborted experimental methods. Each of them was at first thought by many respected authorities to be impossible to accomplish. Had he written his book during those intermediate years, Le Fanu would have scoffed at every one of those efforts as "not only expensive but useless."

LE FANU SUFFERS from an outmoded notion of just why it is that people get sick. His eyes are fixed on a gonfalon that first began to inspire soldiers in the war on disease over a hundred years ago, but has more than outlived its usefulness: that standard, displaying the motto that each disease has a unitary etiology, is in fact a hindrance to continued progress. Its hundred years of dominance since the late nineteenth century has long been over.

The introduction of the germ theory at that time transformed not only the understanding of pathological processes, but the entire philosophy of disease causation. From vaguely expressed theories involving such uncertainties as humors, miasma, and constitutional weakness, physicians and scientists began to look for specific triggering agents, the concept being that for each disease there is only one instigating factor. This formulation, sometimes called the theory of single causes, guided medical research for much of the next century, heightened in authority by its historic association with such monumental figures as Joseph Lister, Louis Pasteur, and Robert Koch.

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The theory of single causes proved extremely useful in the elucidation of infectious disease. As one microbial source after another was discovered, researchers were stimulated to focus their efforts on finding *the* agent that was responsible for each particular sickness or syndrome. Yet it gradually became apparent that some pathologies, though they might have one major causative factor, would not produce sickness in any given individual unless an entire set of circumstances was just right for its development. If several, or sometimes only one, of the contributory factors was absent, no illness occurred.

From this emerged the realization that disease is not an inevitable outcome of a single cause, but rather the result of many kinds of input, following a kind of probabilistic course from the molecular level all the way up to the environmental and perhaps even the psychological. Each of them sets off a chain of biological responses, and their sum total is what is recognized as an illness. And if there is even a relatively small genetic component of such a process, modifying it may abort the entire sequence. This is why it is not only the "single-gene" pathologies that may benefit from therapies directed toward their DNA, but also many, many others now known to be the outcome of such elements—plus plenty more whose genetic interaction we have yet to learn about. The lesson is clear: if an entire sequence of events is required to set off an illness, successful treatment or removal of any one of the elements in that sequence will prevent the disease from occurring, whether the element is genetic or something else.

IV.

LE FANU'S HARSH criticism of what he calls The Social Theory suffers from something of the same disability as his attack on The New Genetics. After correctly pointing out major flaws in the research purporting to show that certain aspects of lifestyle are determinants of health, he accuses the medical establishment of maintaining that these are the single, or at least the major, etiologies of one or another pathological process. I do not know of any responsible physician who claims that the intake of fatty foods *causes* heart attacks. It contributes in varying measure to the probability that they will occur, and even this depends on multiple other factors, some of which are as yet unknown.

It is true that some of the leading proponents of The Social Theory have long insisted that coronary heart disease is attributable primarily to the consumption of saturated fat, but a panel of the American Heart Association (AHA) evaluated their evidence in 1957 and could not substantiate the conclusions that they had drawn. Through a process of inside maneuvering by those with much to lose from such a decision, the relevant committee in time came to include two of the most prominent of the researchers whose studies had been discounted, Ancel Keys of the University of Minnesota and Jeremiah Stamler of the University of Chicago (called by Le Fanu, in one of many such small errors that mar his book, Chicago University). The result was that the original committee's conclusion was reversed, and thereafter the American Heart Association, calling the ingestion of saturated fat "the central explanation of the coronary epidemic," began to propagandize against it. The chicanery involved in this decision was soon forgotten.

LE FANU IS completely correct in his description of this course of events, and it brings no credit to the researchers or to the AHA. Unfortunately for their cause, MRFIT would throw a huge shadow over their theory, but its problems were compounded by the results of another study reported less than a year later, this one under the auspices of the World Health Organization, and involving some fifty thousand male factory workers in Britain, Belgium, Italy and Poland. The results were the same as had been reported following MRFIT. Keys, Stamler and the AHA were left without substantiation of their theory. There was no epidemiological evidence that reducing saturated fat in the diet would reduce the incidence of heart attacks.

Le Fanu, who is addicted to seeking causes that are inherent in independent human biology and therefore unaffected by individual habits, has convinced himself that the increased incidence of coronary heart disease that was observed in the 1940s and 1950s, followed by its subsequent steep decline in the 1980s, can only be compared to the way in which the prevalence of certain infectious diseases has been known to rise and fall with seeming spontaneity.

> This pattern of the 'rise and fall' of heart disease resembled 'the rise and fall' of an infectious disease. It was not a 'social' but a 'biological' pattern, with the obvious implication that some unknown biological factor must be the culprit, either by influencing the severity of atheroma in the coronary arteries, or by precipitating the clot that causes the heart attack—or both.

But though Le Fanu rejects The Social Theory, he is persuaded that cholesterol

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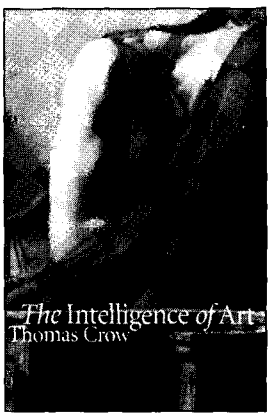

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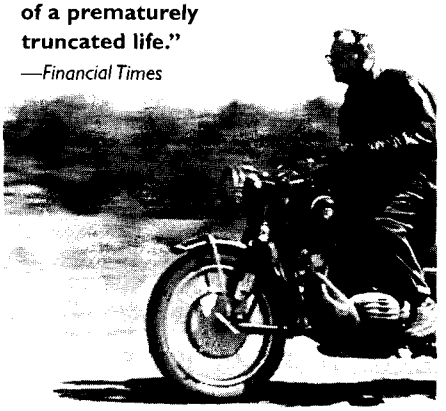

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does play a role. And here he makes one of those insinuative statements that are likely to evoke that "it's about time someone said this" comment:

> Now, cholesterol, as has been noted, was not entirely innocent. Whatever might be the unknown 'biological' cause that explained the rise and fall of heart disease, it clearly was most likely to hit those with higher than average cholesterol levels and therefore more severe atheroma in their coronary arteries. Hence, both the drug companies and the dietary protagonists had a mutual interest in salvaging Keys's thesis. If the drug companies could show that their powerful cholesterol-lowering drugs reduced the chances of a heart attack in those 'at high risk' (which was probable), this would be evidence the disease was indeed 'preventable' which would then shore up the position of the proponents of the dietary theory like Stamler and Keys. On the other hand, if the dietary protagonists could convince the public that too much fat caused heart disease and that everyone should lower their cholesterol levels, this would markedly increase the market for cholesterol-lowering drugs way beyond the minority 'at high risk'. And that is precisely what happened.

In addition, the dietary protagonists are accused of another motive for their unrelenting campaign to perpetrate what Le Fanu calls "the great cholesterol deception": their reputations would be destroyed if they were proven wrong. And so everything was done to support the "false theory" whose acceptance was now seen as a means by which the profits of the pharmaceutical houses might be increased and the professional humiliation of Keys, Stamler, and the AHA avoided.

THIS IS ONE conspiracy theory to which there is good reason to subscribe, and it is worth taking seriously. Whatever may in the long run prove to be the truth about the effect of lifestyle changes in heart disease, there can be little doubt that the entire issue has been exploited by the pharmaceutical houses, into whose hands frightened patients and well-meaning doctors have fallen. After all, what is an individual physician to do with the large number of journal articles from respected research groups, appearing at least weekly or more, which, with seeming statistical significance, relate cholesterol levels, heart disease, and mortality to lifestyle? News of these articles does appear in highly respected periodicals and is repeated over the airwaves. In the average reader's mind, fat, cholesterol, and heart disease become blended into a single grim continuum, and the connections are in time unquestioned.

During the very week I was reading Le Fanu's book, a significant paper appeared in *The New England Journal of Medicine* (no less) from the Harvard Medical School (no less) entitled "Primary Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease in Women Through Diet and Lifestyle." Its conclusion states that "among women, adherence to lifestyle guidelines involving diet, exercise, and abstinence from smoking is associated with a very low risk of coronary heart disease." 84,129 women participated in the study. Such a report came as no news to the many subscribers to the *Journal*, physicians and lay people alike, who have long been accustomed to reading of similar studies, even if the word "very" is not always associated with them.

THIS WOULD SEEM to give the lie to all that Le Fanu has told us, and yet it does not. As any long-time student of medical literature can attest, the past half century's reliance on large-scale statistical studies, whether or not they were randomized controlled clinical trials, has been a mixed blessing. As with MRFIT and the WHO study, the analysis of the data has not infrequently led to conclusions that would seem to fly in the face of the shared experience of clinicians treating patients in the course of everyday practice, and even to be counterintuitive to what any logical person might assume. Sometimes the clinicians and the critically-minded lay people are eventually proven correct, and sometimes the epidemiologists and statisticians are.

On a purely statistical or scientific basis it must be said that the jury is still out on the question of whether lifestyle changes, such as diet modification, really affect health. But it should also be pointed out that such studies as MRFIT and the WHO trial stand in direct contradiction to a great deal of evidence pointing in the opposite direction. More importantly, they stand in direct contradiction to what a widely experienced internist will describe at the end of a long career during which he or she has followed thousands of patients over a period of decades. Though such a mature clinician has certainly observed that changing eating or other habits is very difficult to achieve, those patients who manage to do it are usually greatly benefitted in numerous ways, including those that Le Fanu says are a delusion.

And here we are faced with yet another paradox of this controversial brain-teaser of a book. At the end of a long bashing of the goals of the medicine of the past twenty years, Le Fanu sums up with a statement that is so undeniably correct that one can almost forgive him for the error-strewn, selective, and even misleading path he has taken to get to this point. On his penultimate page, he presents his declaration of independence from molecular biology, genetics, the tyranny of epidemiological studies, the application of ultra-sophisticated statistical methods to therapeutic intervention, and all of the other twenty-first century trappings that increase the distance between the patient and the personal physician who knows him as a distinct individual rather than as an enclosed chamber of biological phenomena and an object of modern versions of *la methode numérique*.

The solution, Le Fanu proclaims, is to be found in a return to the values inherent in the healing compact between two human beings, doctor and patient. It is in the study of individual men and women by caring and highly skilled healers that the promise of medicine has always been centered and best fulfilled. And this is no different than it has ever been.

> The time has come to relocate medicine within that tradition so eloquently invoked by Sir William Osler. The timeless virtues of judgement and good sense might then triumph over the shallow restlessness of the present through a reaffirmation of the personal human relationship between doctor and patient. The personal doctor listens carefully to what he is being told.

IRONICALLY, SOME OF those who might be expected to oppose such an apparently old-fashioned view of the art of healing stand shoulder to shoulder with Le Fanu in this, as should every doctor who has ever sat quietly and listened to a sick man or a sick woman tell a story of illness, or laid on hands during a thoughtful physical examination. In a wide-ranging critique of the usefulness of randomized trials, Alvan Feinstein, one of the world's leading clinical epidemiologists, and himself a physician of wide experience, has this to say:

> Although highly successful in investigating remedial therapy, randomized clinical trials have sometimes created rather than clarified controversy when the treatments were for the complex problems involved in studying either the primary prevention of disease or the secondary prevention of adverse progression for an established disease.... Consequently, despite the magnificent scientific achievements of randomized clinical trials, the foundation of a basic science of patient care will also require major attention to the events and observations that occur in the ordinary circumstances of clinical practice.

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And so the answer is finally not as simple as LeFanu would have his readers believe.

V.

Le Fanu tells us on that same penultimate page that genuine progress is only to be made "by accepting at face value the version of events as revealed by this historical account," which is an intolerable burden for any critical reader, since his "historical account" is so skewed to his polemical intentions. And if that were not enough, it is dotted with those erroneous statements that make a reader wonder how they could be made by an author otherwise obviously so much in command of his material.

Some of Le Fanu's mistakes are small (he tells us that the word "cortisone" is synonymous with "steroids"), but others make one doubt his familiarity with the topic under discussion, and sometimes induce suspicion that he is distorting facts for the sake of strengthening his argument. Le Fanu's wishful thinking to the contrary, insulin does not cure diabetes; neglecting the lethal microbe *clostridium tetani*, he writes that "none of the bacteria that cause disease in humans can be isolated from the soil"; bioengineers will be astounded to read that "it is only a matter of elementary mechanics to devise a machine that can do the work of human hands"; in a book that bases its arguments on "this historical account," it is disappointing to read that "in the early 1950s, patients who had been ventilated during major surgery such as open heart operations would be sent back to the ward breathing spontaneously," in view of the fact that neither the surgeons at the Mayo Clinic nor those at the University of Minnesota, where open heart surgery was introduced, had done more than a very few cases before the late summer and autumn of 1955; there is no such anatomical structure as "the main aorta"; there is surely not a neurologist alive who would agree that "drug treatment reduces the incidence of strokes almost to zero"; stomach ulcers are not synonymous with peptic ulcers (most peptic ulcers occur in the duodenum); the Freud-bashing of the day notwithstanding, it is silly and irresponsible to remark that Freudian theory is "based on the perverse proposition that everything is the reverse of what it seems"; the demonstration of the structure of DNA by Watson and Crick hardly "unlocked the mysteries of the genetic code"—and there are plenty more misstatements like these.

In Le Fanu's book, the Nobel Prize winner Alexis Carrel is Carrell; Senator George McGovern is Senator Edward McGovern; the pioneer of cardiac transplantation Norman Shumway is Norman Shunway; the National Cancer Institute is the U.S. National Institute of Cancer; and so on. A few of Le Fanu's annoying little errors are repeated in several places in the text as well as in the index, and all are to be found in both the British and American editions of the book. These and certain inconsistencies in the bibliography add up to a sloppy book.

And yet, reading between the lines, it is apparent that Le Fanu knows a great deal about his topic. The first half of *The Rise and Fall of Modern Medicine*, in spite of its sprinkling of factual errors, is nevertheless generally quite accurate in its overall presentation and is written in a rather personalized manner, so that some of the contributors come to life on the page. Even the contentious second half of the book demonstrates a wide knowledge of the subject matter, albeit one marred by certain misapprehensions and misinterpretations, as noted above.

So what is a reader left with, after studying this book, or perhaps only struggling through the obliquities of this attempt to analyze it? The first lesson is one that unswerving evangelists of the modern discipline that we call biomedicine ignore at their own peril, and at the peril of their patients. It is that medicine is not a science. It is an art, and an uncertain art at that. In recommending a return to the principles of William Osler, Le Fanu might have cited a specter that will always haunt the doctor taking care of the sick and advising the well, a specter of which Osler spoke before an audience of physicians almost a century ago: "this everlasting *perhaps* with which we have to preface so much connected with the practice of our art."

Inconsistencies abound, pendula swing, authorities differ, and medical certainties are ephemeral. No matter the brilliant efforts of the laboratory researchers, the statisticians and even the scientifically trained medical journalists, the *perhaps* will always be with us. There is no randomized clinical trial, and there is no complex experiment in molecular biology, that will ever provide the answer to caring for the distinctive individual who has come for help, or at least not one that a wise clinician will not already have intuited through a a combination of his or her training, experience and empathy. About this at least, Le Fanu is right: "The timeless virtues of judgement and good sense" do indeed provide the only real basis on which to fulfill the ancient Hippocratic compact between the healer and those who need healing.

Le Fanu may have failed to refute The Social Theory or The New Genetics, but his contribution is actually far greater than that. As wrong-headed as some of his notions may be, he has held up for inspection the frayed fabric of the tissue of certainty in which we clothe medical knowledge. He is a gadfly, a kind of *agent provocateur* who stirs up rebellion and afflicts the smug. He makes us think about our assumptions, though when we think critically enough we realize that his conclusions are also incorrect. So at the end of his book we are still left with the need for counsel. How should a physician advise those who might question the effects of lifestyle on health, when it has now become clear that the science is not as strong as it has been made out to be?

Well, here is one old clinician who will tell anyone who asks that the evidence is quite strong enough for him. It is consistent with what he has observed in the lives of his patients and in his own life as well; it is consistent with his understanding of physiology and the pathology of disease; it is consistent with the opinions of colleagues whom he respects; it is consistent with common sense. Long accustomed to making decisions in the face of the uncertainty inherent in the art of medicine, this grizzled surgeon advises every reader of Le Fanu's book or the present essay to eat less unsaturated fat, stop smoking, and get plenty of strenuous exercise. And one more thing: find yourself a better-paying job. ■

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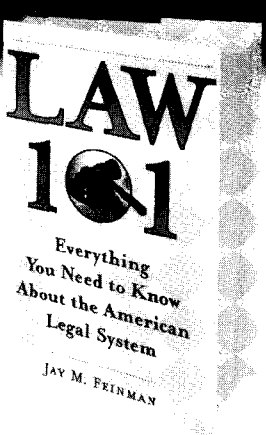

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The Two Wings

By JOSEPH KERMAN

Berlioz
Volume One: The Making of an Artist
by David Cairns

(University of California Press, 648 pp., $32)

Berlioz
Volume Two: Servitude and Greatness
by David Cairns

(University of California Press, 896 pp., $32)

"MY WHOLE LIFE has been one long, ardent pursuit of an ideal which I created myself," Hector Berlioz wrote to Pauline Viardot in 1859. "Love or music—which power can uplift man to the sublimest heights?", he also wrote, in a much-quoted passage from his *Memoirs*. "Love cannot give an idea of music: music can give an idea of love. But why separate them? They are the two wings of the soul." Berlioz's ideals in love and in music were formed as a child, and what strikes one after traversing David Cairns's impressive and beautiful new biography, or what strikes one with new force, is the way Berlioz attained those ideals: not by adjusting them to the requirements of mature experience, but by returning to them self-consciously, late in life, in their childhood innocence.

On the wing of music the ideal was Gluck, which should not come as a surprise, given the recent history of French music when Berlioz came to it in 1810. What is more surprising is that this ideal developed without the child ever knowing more than a few pages of Gluck's music. But Berlioz's first musical revelation, at the age of seventeen after arriving in Paris, was Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and in-between copying out Gluck scores at the library of the Paris Conservatoire he laid the groundwork for his formidable career as a critic, with polemical squibs rhapsodizing about Gluck and Spontini and attacking the *dilettanti*—canary fanciers, we used to call them—attendant on Rossini, then in his ascendancy at the Paris Opéra.

Les Troyens, his homage to the older master, came at the end of Berlioz's career, in 1863, after many digressions: successful symphonies and large-scale sacred works, and a series of dismal operatic failures (one opera completed, mounted, and hissed, and several others aborted). Charles Rosen has compared *Les Troyens* to the *pompier* paintings of the time, but others see it as a luminous, almost miraculous, recreation of Gluck's neoclassical vision in the twilight of Romanticism. A subject taken from myth, noble poetry nobly declaimed, songs of intense and simple expressivity, an orchestra of the greatest eloquence: these were the very qualities, Cairns tells us, for which Gluck was praised in the *Biographie universelle* that was young Hector's introduction to Gluck and his music. Where Gluck turned to Euripides, Berlioz turned to Virgil, even picking up the episode from the *Aeneid* that drew tears when the boy construed it at his father's knee.

By a turn of fate, the Opéra now engaged the composer in the role of dramaturg to supervise revivals of Gluck's *Orphée* and *Alceste*, as vehicles for the incomparable Pauline Viardot. Another ideal! He started to fall in love again, to the considerable distress of that sympathetic and worldly lady. And attaining the ideal in love also took place late in life, again after many digressions—digressions much more serious than that of Viardot. Berlioz makes sure that we hear the story from him, in his *Memoirs*. In the main draft of this famous and marvelous work, we hear about the older girl with whom he fell in love, hopelessly, as a twelve-year old boy growing up in the Dauphiné, near the French Alps. *Stella montis*, he calls her, for Estelle Duboeuf was as firmly fused in his mind with Romantic landscape as his first wife, the actress Harriet Smithson (she of the *Fantastic Symphony*) was fused with Shakespeare. He will never forget the rock in the neighboring mountain village where she stood gazing out over the valley.

A subsequent, altogether lyrical update to the *Memoirs* has the author returning to his childhood home and climbing the mountain path to Estelle's rock, thrilling or trembling at every old landmark that is or isn't there. He learns that she still lives in the region, recently widowed. In a final update, probably sixteen years later, he retraces his steps up the mountain path and this time presents himself to a very surprised Estelle. (This is in 1864; she is now sixty-seven.) He attends on her with caution, ultimately proposes to her, is turned down, and settles for an epistolatory relationship that casts a glint of light over his depressed, pain-wracked last years.

So while the book originally ended with a vintage Berlioz rant at his enemies—

> As for you, maniacs, mastiffs and stupid oxen, as for my Guildersterns and my Rosencranzes, my Iagos, my petty Osrics, insects and snakes of every species: farewell, my . . . friends! I despise you, and my cordial hope is not to die before having forgotten you—

with appropriate footnotes to *Hamlet* the final text prints some of the relevant correspondence and ends on a different note: "Let us try to think no more of art. Stella! I can die now without anger or bitterness."

ADD THE SCINTILLATING prose to the strong story line, and you will require no convincing that the *Memoirs* is the work of a very fine and a very experienced writer. Loaded with literary artifice, it does its work as a chronicle, a rhetorical exercise, and a spin-center for a quintessentially Romantic self-image all at the same time. "What an incredible novel my life is," Berlioz exclaims at the age of thirty. And on another occasion: "My life is a novel that interests me deeply." He presented the updated *Memoirs* to Estelle before putting the question.

The book is also, of course, a primary source for the biographer, and long before completing what is bound to be regarded as the standard biography, David Cairns prepared a much-admired edition and translation of the *Memoirs*, in 1969. Two high-quality publishers have since let it go out of print. The extended apparatus, a major contribution, sorted out errors and also adjudicated cases of possible misrepresentation, of which many had been alleged. Berlioz almost always came out ahead; the effort was to make his text transparent, with predictable conse-

JOSEPH KERMAN is the author most recently of *Concerto Conversations* (Harvard University Press).

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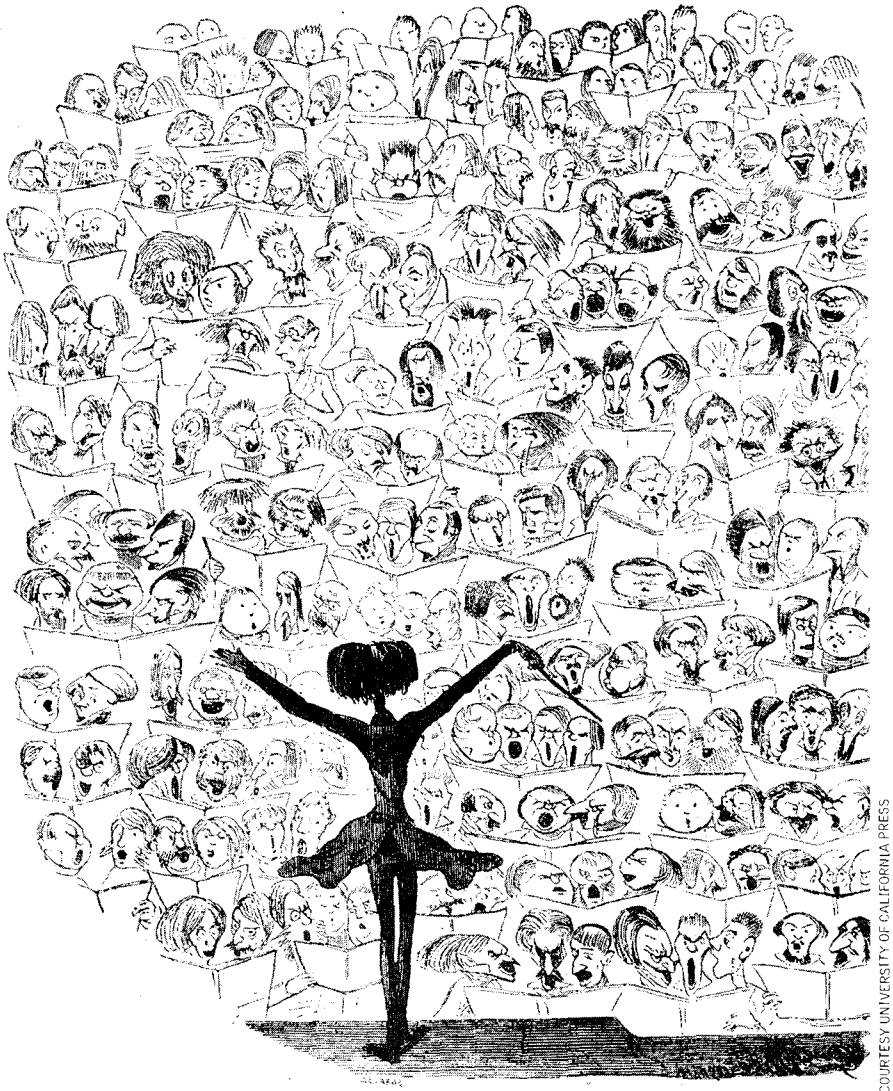

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Berlioz conducting one chorus of the Société Philarmonique, engraving after a drawing by Gustave Doré, 1880

quences for the biography. For while Cairns knows and says that the *Memoirs* has to be understood as a literary construction, the book's fictive quality never seems to dent for him its "largely and essentially true record of fact." It is the French editor of the *Mémoires*, Pierre Citron, who has no problem seeing its author pushing at facts—giving himself *le beau rôle*, even succumbing to paranoia and the like—without giving up an inch of admiration and love for his subject.

The strength of Cairns's biography lies it its thoroughness of research, its amplitude, its authority, and its author's remarkable sensitivity and sympathy for Berlioz—indeed, for all those around him. It is a life, not a life-and-works, as Cairns makes clear at the outset, though each of Berlioz's major works receives an unhurried appreciation, in non-technical language, on a level of warmth and insight that music critics seldom achieve. Cairns's limpid prose glows in these sections, but it is also extraordinarily successful in imparting quotidian detail while still holding the reader's attention. Nor is this biography a psychobiography,

> not so much from unwillingness [he says] as from lack of competence. Maybe in falling in love at the age of twelve with a goddess-like young woman years older than himself Berlioz was projecting an image of the good mother he had not found in infancy. . . . But I have left such promising inquiries to others who have the skill.

WHAT ARE SOME of the gray areas in this biography—the mysteries that Cairns has not been able to illuminate, and that psychobiography maybe could? Of course the love ideal that the boy formed in Estelle Duboeuf on her rock, transferred to Harriet Smithson on the stage, and sought out again in Estelle, has to do with his not finding a "good mother" in infancy. Not much mystery here. "*Méchante mère!*," he exclaims in the *Memoirs*, after describing a trick that she played on him in connection with this very Estelle. Joséphine Berlioz is one of several people who are edited out of the *Memoirs*, or treated very selectively. She appears only one more time, in a terrible scene in which she furiously implores twenty-one-year-old Hector to abandon a career in music, kneels at his feet, and after cursing and disowning him, refuses to stay in the same house with her son or receive his farewells when he leaves for Paris.

Music and Estelle, two wings of the soul: did these two ideals develop in some way from the same vexed source? What remains a mystery, after all, is how a boy brought up by parents who were only mildly musical in a tiny country town almost devoid of music, who never traveled, never heard a symphony (let alone an opera), should have developed the incredibly fierce passion for music that he did.

ANOTHER PERSON EDITED out of the *Memoirs* is Marie Recio, for whom Berlioz left Harriet and whom he later married. "I married again ... *I was obliged to* ... after eight years of this second marriage I lost my wife" he writes (his ellipses, his italics). She is buried, exhumed, reburied, and neither named nor spoken of further. The exhumation scene draws from *Hamlet* and *La Dame aux camélias*. This unpleasant woman, an indifferent singer ("she sings like a cat"), prone to bad behavior in public, casts a mysterious dark shadow over Berlioz's biography. In the letters, too, two hundred of them, Marie remains a complete cipher. We get only a few new details to touch up the picture: her will stipulates that if her portrait is not kept, rather than be sold it should be given to a friend; in a letter Berlioz hints at fantasies of murdering her. His distressed friends said the composer was "wantonly ruined" by the relationship, "subjugated," "like the powerless King Lear himself." (That was Robert Schumann's impression.) Cairns documents several occasions when he tried to extricate himself from it.

I doubt that he meant it. Marie gave him something that he needed: sex, and probably support and stability. He was lonely without her and distraught when she died. That this exacting composer allowed her to sing at his concerts "argues a degree of weakness which on his own terms was criminal," says Cairns, for once really vexed; and I think that this argument could be extended to the relationship as a whole, if by "weakness" here we mean failing to live up to, or betraying, one's ideals. Berlioz's terms were Ber-

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lioz's ideals. And whereas Marie quit singing quite soon, the criminal betrayal of ideal love extended over a period of twenty years, twelve as lovers and eight as man and wife.

What dominated Berlioz "beyond reason," wrote his close friend the composer Stephen Heller,

> was the constant contemplation of himself, of his own passionate feelings, his behavior, everything he did. He was one of those people for whom it is necessary always to appear interesting to themselves, who need to attribute an exalted significance to everything they do, feel, suffer, the good and the bad.

There was no exalted significance in his relationship with Marie, as there was with Harriet and Estelle. There was just the bad. The worst of all was that so far from living ardently for his ideals, as he proclaimed in the letter to Viardot, he was living with a daily reproach to his self-image. What bitterness this must have caused him, bottled up because he could not express it in the expansive language and behavior that vented his other passionate feelings.

It may have externalized itself and spilled over into the cosmic bitterness about persons and institutions that blocked his way in Paris. Berlioz's love-hate relationship with Paris runs through the *Memoirs* like an *idée fixe*. He felt about Paris the way Dr. Johnson felt about London, and without Paris his career would be inconceivable; Paris enabled his career. Yet Paris also crushed him. As a flamboyant and aggressive anti-establishment crusader, he attracted enemies in the profession and in the government bureaucracy only too naturally. The official opera and concert institutions shut him out; he had to put on most of his concerts entirely on his own and they cost him blood. The bottom line was that Paris never yielded him a job as conductor, professor, music administrator, anything above his minor sinecure at the library of the Conservatoire. He supported himself as a critic, work that he loathed, left him no time for composition, and (of course) made him more enemies.

Les Troyens forms an ambiguous climax to this sorry story. Although the score may have realized a childhood ideal, the premiere in 1863 precipitated a lifetime of bitterness. As the outcome of lengthy intrigues and lobbying, the work was first accepted at the Paris Opéra, the one venue that might theoretically have done it justice, and then set aside in favor of another show—Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, no less—and then transferred to an inferior theater, where only half of it could be mounted, for the opera is very long. Meanwhile things dragged on for five years, tight money required the production to be scaled down and the orchestra reduced, and drastic cuts were taken both before and after the opening.

In spite of all this, the truncated, renamed *Les Troyens à Carthage* was rather successful, if not on the *Cats*-like scale that Berlioz envied in Meyerbeer and Halévy. It was acclaimed in the press, and it made so much money that Berlioz could at last afford to retire from journalism. He fired off a whole series of letters describing his success as terrific, stunning, splendid, and magnificent, and on returning to the theater after some weeks of illness and discovering that new cuts had been taken, he still wrote to Humbert Ferrand, his best friend, that the performance was superb. Meyerbeer came to see it twelve times.

It was only some months later, in a new "Postface" for the *Memoirs*, that *Les Troyens* became a calamity, expounded in some of the most acrid and despairing pages in the whole book. The published score seems to have tormented him particularly:

> To see a work of this kind laid out for sale with the publisher's cuts and arrangements— oh, can there be greater torture! A dismembered score in the window of a music shop, like the carcase of a calf in a butcher's stall, with pieces cut off and sold as little treats to titillate the concierge's cat!

Although the impresario Carvalho mooted a production of the opera's other half, *La Prise de Troie*, and there were inquiries from London and Germany, Berlioz squelched all initiatives. He canceled a concert performance of the fourth act when the issue of cuts came up. (Of course it was outrageous to demand cuts from someone in Berlioz's position. Still, what did he have to lose?)

Channel

after Henry Vaughan

Water
you are, not were nor will be—

as cataracts & creeks, as river brown as trout,
as kidney and as skin.

Water you are, not were
nor will be

rolling ocean green or

quiet

with not wind enough to twirl the one red leaf.

What channel does my soul seek?

This—

snow melting from trees like rain, a clean rinsing,
a quickness which the sun has kissed—

and this—salt desert water swollen with birds feasting
on brine flies feasting on algae—

and this—siphoned through sulfurous rock, glacier
old as amaranth.

I stray and roam.

To be useful, to be clear—

Natasha Saje

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It may be too strong to characterize Berlioz's over-reaction here as a mystery, but it does seem to call for an explanation. I would look for it in the context of the momentous step that the composer had been mulling over for some years. Defeated by Paris, he had decided to give up composition, and now was the time. He made a public announcement of his renunciation in the Postface to the *Memoirs*—the same Postface in which his despair over *Les Troyens* is so vividly recorded and, I think we may suspect, consciously or unconsciously exaggerated. *Les Troyens* is treated as the last straw. Here the idée fixe of the *Memoirs* receives its final and fatal transformation, even as the two wings of the soul, it seems, are separated after all.

David Cairns, taking the Berlioz persona of the *Memoirs* at his word, sees neither exaggeration nor novelistic license. After the initial euphoria, he says, it was inevitable that reality would crowd in. Berlioz will not compose, he cannot compose, because he is deeply, bitterly, and justifiably discouraged and depressed. He is in constant pain.

There must have been something else, too. It is fearful to read in his letters about the "intestinal neuralgia," as it was called, month after month, year after year—from four in the morning to four in the afternoon continuously, he says, during one spell. Yet the phenomenal resiliency of his youth was not entirely dulled. There was some kind of love relationship in 1863, and more Gluck coaching at the Opéra. We hear of many operas that he took in (eight performances of *Don Giovanni* in July 1866), ebullient promenades down the boulevards, and some splendid dinners—even high-jinks with Stephen Heller. He had renounced composing, but not conducting. On the podium, the neuralgia tended to dissipate. He traveled to Weimar, Strasbourg (an audience of 6,000), Vienna, and Cologne; and in the winter of 1867-1868, a year before his death, he dragged himself to Russia for no fewer than eight concerts, conducting his own music, half-a-dozen Beethoven symphonies and concertos, and more.

BERLIOZ WAS NEVER one to miss an ironic twist. "To *Les Troyens* at least," he writes in his dispirited Postface, "the unhappy feuilletonist owes his deliverance." A much more distressing irony is that after complaining all his life that criticism left him no time to compose, when he retired as a critic he stopped composing. There would seem to be rich material for psycho-biography here: an artist who had to fight for fifteen years to gain parental approval of his calling abandoning it at the height of his powers. As well as illness, age, and depression, a compositional crisis must also have affected Berlioz's decision, for it is evident that he was going through an extended period of uncertainty about his artistic direction, which in turn intensified his depression and set up a vicious circle.

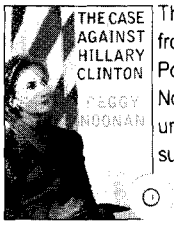
His output had slowed significantly in his late years, and it used to be said that his inspiration had simply dried up. Nobody is likely to credit this who knows *Les Troyens* and the opera *Béatrice et Bénédict*, his last work, written for the opening of a new theater in Baden-Baden (one of Berlioz's rare commissions) in the period between the composition and the premiere of *Les Troyens*. Read Cairns on these two pieces, read Cairns after listening to the music:

> The colors and textures and rhythms of the verse [of *Les Troyens*], the mixture of monumentality and pictorial vividness, the structural balance of violence and calm, the symbolic linking of widely separate events and emotional states, the sense of fatality, of the power of unreason in human affairs, the sympathy with suffering: it is Virgil himself. . . . We hear it in the change from the sound of Acts 1 and 2, harsh, possessed, rhythmically on a knife-edge, to the warm, expansive Act 3 . . . in the strange, antique sadness of the music for the farmworkers, like the "melancholy voice of Virgil"as Berlioz had often imagined it "reading from the *Georgics*"; in the glowing moment, mirroring the poem, when Aeneas strips off his disguise and utters his orchestra-silencing "*Reine—je suis Ené*". . . and in the terrible stillness and finality of Dido's farewell to life. He did not have to search for it: it had been his kingdom for almost as long as he could remember. The act of realizing it in music was a final entering into his own.

Berlioz's crisis, I should think, devolved not on composition itself, but on composition in the grand, innovative, sensational, often grandiose genre that he had made into his signature and that sustained his self-image. The last composition prior to *Les Troyens*, the oratorio *L'Enfance du Christ*, had excited comment for its mildness. *Les Troyens* exorcized heroic ghosts from long ago. *Béatrice et Bénédict* is light-hearted, delectable, playful, lightly orchestrated—understated Berlioz, Berlioz-lite. Its genesis seems symbolic: asked for a three-act Gothic melodrama, he offered instead a one-act *opéra comique* after *Much Ado About Nothing* emptied of the role of Claudio.

We could view these works as ideologically wrong for Berlioz, wrong at least for the young Berlioz. A French critic has written dryly of his "insatiable appetite for glory," and for this composer *la gloire* meant presenting revolutionary works to thunderous acclaim, preferably in Paris. (It sometimes seems as though the acclaim mattered more to him than the music.) This had been difficult enough in the 1830s and 1840s, when Berlioz represented the musical avant-garde virtually alone. By 1860, however, he was no longer the man of the hour; this was now Wagner, whose *Tannhäuser* had bumped *Les Troyens* at the Opéra, whose publicity apparatus exasperated Berlioz, and whose latest music the older man could not fathom. Dinner with his dear, true friend Liszt, now allied with Wagner, was not possible unless they agreed not to discuss music.

He was facing a challenge that most artists face at some point in their careers—at a later point, in fact, than most others. For Berlioz, this challenge appears to have been complicated by another, arrived at equally late: the challenge of maturity. ■



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ARCHIVE

Plainly, But With Flair

By BRIAN PHILLIPS

Repair
by C.K. Williams

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 69 pp., $21)

Misgivings: My Mother, My Father, Myself
by C.K. Williams

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 170 pp., $21)

"Didactic poetry," Shelley declares in the preface to *Prometheus Unbound*, "is my abhorrence; nothing can be equally well expressed in prose that is not tedious and supererogatory in verse." The poems of C.K. Williams are not quite didactic, but neither are they quite undidactic. His long poetic line often dips its toe testingly into the waters of the prosaic, and his inspections of motive and meaning seem more fit to offer moral instruction than to summon aesthetic intensity.

Too often, the second half of a Williams stanza devolves into critical commentary on the event of the first half, swerving casually from the fictional scene it has been sketching into speculation on what that fiction means for "us," as though the duty of the poet were not only to propose the metaphor, but also to supervise its interpretation. In these moments Williams does not make art of the process by which the mind arrives at explanation; he simply explains, never describing so much as a housedress without also informing the housewife that

> I see the dresses also as a proclamation:
> that in your dim kitchen,
> your laundry, your bleak concrete yard,
> what you revealed of yourself was a
> fabulation;
> your real sensual nature, veiled in those
> sexless vestments, was utterly your
> dominion.

Williams has a real skill for scrutinizing intentions, his own and those of the characters, real and fictional, who inhabit his poetic narratives. His best poems, including many from his successful collections of the late '80s and early '90s, limit themselves to a kind of privileged observation, confining their self-commentary to strict, short psychological underscorings. His worst poems, including some from *Repair*, reveal too much of themselves. When Williams restrains his urge to tell us exactly what his characters are thinking and exactly what his metaphors mean, he is capable of real sensibility; but when he gives full vent to his talent for perceptive explanation, he achieves the strange effect of obscuring his subjects beneath layers of clarification.

In this vein Williams follows his resonant, if verbose, description of cracking "a needle-awl into a block of ice"—"the way a perfect section through it crazes into gleaming fault-lines, fractures, facets; / dazzling silvery deltas that in one too-quick-to-capture instant madly complicate the cosmos of its innards"—with an immediate aside about how the activity is also "a metaphor, like Kafka's frozen sea within." And in "Archetypes," he follows an obvious metaphor for the essential separateness of individuals—one sleeping lover jerking inexplicably away from the other—with an essay into the mind of the wakeful lover: "I felt again how separate we all are from one another, how even our passions / ... heal only the most benign divisions."

There is something a little patronizing about this sort of elucidation, as Williams shepherds the reader away from direct aesthetic experience and into the fold of comprehension. It would be one thing if he worked the process of understanding—of the mind coming to grips with meaning—into the unfoldings of his poems, so that the block of ice and the sleeping lover were simply two starting points for his poems' real subject, which is thought; but he does not do this. Instead he seems to jump-cut between the subject of a poem and a conclusory commentary on that subject, sharply demarcating his cuts with phrases like "And I realized" and "Isn't it this way for us, too?"

Thought is almost never Williams's real subject, and his poems almost never take the shape of thought. Like Lowell, he is his feelings' historian rather than their rhapsode, and the subjects of his poems are almost always exactly what he says they are: separation, loneliness, the memory of old wounds, emotional healing. (This last is the most common subject of *Repair*.) The sort of verse that Williams has undertaken to write is patient, somewhat pedagogical, and in love with clarity; many of his poems seem designed to do the work of the reader as well as the work of the writer, and one feels that they are meant to succeed by convincing that Williams's reasons for selecting a particular metaphor are sound, rather than by shocking the reader into feeling the way the poet has felt.

Thus a poem called "Depths" equates a child's fear of falling from his father's shoulders, where he sits looking down from the roof of a building, with a young man's fear of being disappointed in love:

> Even now I feel a frost of fear
> to think I might not have found you,
> my love, or not believed in you,
> but still be reeling on another roof.

But the single word devoted in the poem to the evocation of fear—calling the feeling a "frost"—evokes nothing; there is no fear in the poem, there is only the reference to fear, and the subsequent explanation of the equation. The metaphor, insufficiently expressed, sputters; the work of poetry, strictly speaking, has been left unfinished.

Williams operates within a narrow linguistic range and with a constricted formal imagination. As *Repair* shows, his register is casual, prizing simplicity; but Williams is no populist. His language is conversational rather than academic, but his range of reference is often quite the opposite. He uses the diction of common speech to describe simple events and narratives, but his simple narratives often allude to sources ranging from Greek mythology, one of his favorite sources for metaphor, to English Romanticism and the work of the French symbolists. His line recalls Whitman and Ginsberg in length and shape, and his delivery recalls the uncluttered, easy manner of Elizabeth Bishop (I can imagine a Williams poem beginning "I caught a tremendous fish"), but his influences are in some ways as European as they are American. His work reflects the moral self-questioning of Herbert, the plain-spokenness and the yearning toward nature of Wordsworth, the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart of the later Yeats.

Like Yeats, Williams takes the responsibilities of verse very seriously. He is dedicated to its ardors rather than to its pleasures, which may explain his exegetical inclination: if he ensures that the reader understands what he means in a

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poem, he has saved his work from the threat of self-indulgence. And yet he often indulges his reader, glossing every potential difficulty, and in this way he leaves his reader curiously vacant of ardor. In "House," Williams begins by introducing his metaphor, the reconstruction of a ruined house around its existing frame:

> The way you'd renovate a ruined house,
> keeping the "shell," as we call it, brick,
> frame or stone,
> and razing the rest: the inside walls—
> partitions, we say—then stairs, pipes,
> wiring, commodes,
> saving only . . . no, saving nothing this
> time; take the self-shell down to its
> emptiness, hollowness, void.

There is skill in that procession of nouns indicating absence—from emptiness through hollowness to void, from simple absence through essential absence to nothingness. But the passage's self-conscious flirtation with the diction of the renovating workmen ("'shell,' as we call it . . . partitions, we say") is distracting, and already the not-terribly-complicated metaphor is receiving authorial explanation ("the self-shell").

In the second stanza—the finest stanza in the poem and one of the finest passages in *Repair*—Williams enacts the demolition of the house, getting down to the essentials beneath it:

> Down to the scabrous plaster, down to
> the lining bricks with mortar squashed
> through their joints,
> down to the eyeless windows, the forlorn
> doorless doorways, the sprung joists
> powdery with rot;
> down to the slab of the cellar, the erratically stuccoed foundation, the black
> earth underneath all.

The lively description in this stanza (the mortar squashed through the joints of the bricks, the joists powdery with rot) is perfectly clear on its own; the Yeatsian clearing-away of the rotten and the ruined, and the rediscovery of the black earth on which the "self-shell" rests, requires no further elucidation.

But in the third stanza, Williams acts like one of those eyeless windows, and makes things utterly transparent:

> Down under all to the ancient errors,
> indolence, envy, pretension, the frailties
> as though in the gene;
> down to where consciousness cries,
> "Make me new," but pleads as pitiably,
> "Cherish me as I was."
> Down to the swipe of the sledge, the ravaging bite of the pick; rubble, wreckage,
> vanity: the abyss.

The "surprise" in this stanza is that the black earth does not represent, as the nature-image often does in this kind of poem, the desirable or the good, but rather the "ancient errors" on which, in this poem, the self is grounded. But why not make this assignation a subject for portrayal, rather than for explication? Why not describe the black earth in such a way as to make its function clear? Why zoom abruptly out of the metaphor at the start of the third stanza into an explanation of what it means, only to zoom as abruptly back into it at the close of the poem? After all, this kind of house is old as the hills—it was familiar to Shakespeare ("O, what a mansion have those vices got, / Which for their habitation chose out thee") and to Descartes, who devoted a long passage in the *Discourse on Method* to a metaphor equating home reconstruction and philosophical self-improvement.

When it is incorporated into aesthetic experience, of course, the authorial negotiation of metaphor has an ancient and serious history in English poetry, both in its disclosures (the Everyman tradition, Spenserian allegories, Petrarchan love-conceits) and in its concealments (the Anglo-Saxon kenning, the metaphysical tangles of Donne and Herbert). Williams is often acutely aware of the poetic traditions that precede him—his poem "The Island" alludes to Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Yeats, and Hopkins in just over a page—but his lapses of metaphoric rigor never seem figured into any such tradition. He seems to feel that his poems require their mini-commentaries in order to make their point, as though making a point were, well, the point of a poem.

It does not help that Williams's long, wordy line and his occasional looseness with language imply a prose style as much as his compacted multisyllabics and his occasional care with language imply a poetic style. Consider the opening of "The Poet", from *Repair*, and see if you can guess where the line breaks should go when it is transcribed in prose:

> I always knew him as "Bobby the poet," though whether he was one or not, someone who lives in words, making a world from their music, might be a question. In those strange years of hippiedom and "people-power," saying you were an artist made you one, but at least Bobby acted the way people think poets are supposed to. He dressed plainly, but with flair, spoke little, yet listened with genuine attention, and a kind of preoccupied, tremulous seriousness always seemed to absorb him.

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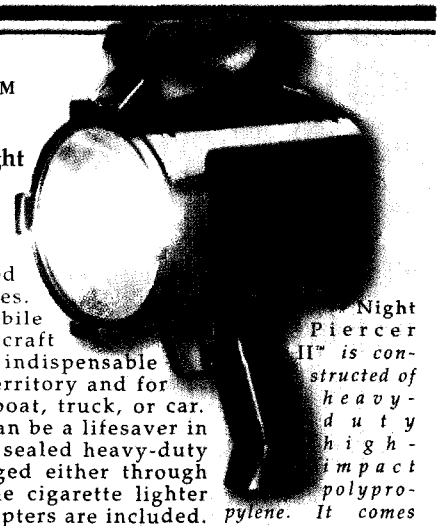

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Compare this character sketch, written in Williams's "poetic" language, with a similar sketch from Williams's affecting new prose memoir, *Misgivings: My Mother, My Father, Myself*:

> I remember them dancing like that at their fiftieth wedding anniversary party: everyone's watching them, they both look dashing. My mother has on a beautiful new dress, and she's just beaming with pleasure, as though my father had just wonderfully surprised her with some new step, and my father looks, unless you'd known him before, healthy, physically impressive, tanned, graceful.

The styles are virtually indistinguishable, with the same reliance on long sentences made up of many short clauses, the same use of rhythmic punctuation, and the same dependence on strings of adjectives and adverbs to carry descriptive freight ("plainly, but with flair"; "healthy, physically impressive").

OF COURSE, THERE may be something slightly unfair about invoking this likeness between prose style and poetic style critically, simply because to do so is to ignore the work of the line break as a material component of the poem. If the basic difference between poetry and prose is not a difference in attitude, subject, or rhetorical register, then there is nothing reductive or lazy about identifying it as material, formal, or even typographical. The mere presence of the line break, with the pressure that it places on language, can imbue a block of text with aesthetic possibilities that are vastly different from those available to the same text written with no line break. A great many extraordinary poems would seem as bafflingly unpoetic as Williams's, if they were written out as prose: "As the cat climbed over the top of the jamcloset, first the right forefoot, carefully, then the hind, stepped down into the pit of the empty flowerpot." In the same way, it may be that Williams's particular use of line breaks in that passage from "The Poet" transforms it in some way, or distinguishes it aesthetically from its prose incarnation.

The question, then, is to what effect Williams's line breaks work. Here is the passage written with his lineation intact:

> I always knew him as "Bobby the poet,"
> though whether he ever was one or not,
> someone who lives in words, making a
> world from their music, might be a
> question.
>
> In those strange years of hippiedom and
> "people-power," saying you were an artist
> made you one, but at least Bobby acted
> the way people think poets are supposed
> to.
>
> He dressed plainly, but with flair, spoke
> little, yet listened with genuine attention,
> and a kind of preoccupied, tremulous
> seriousness always seemed to absorb
> him.

A few things are immediately obvious. There are three stanzas, each containing a single sentence of the prose fragment, so that three of the six line breaks occur after a period. Two of the remaining three occur after a comma, at a natural moment of pause. The remaining break, that separating "saying you were an artist" from "made you one" in the middle stanza, is the only standout, balancing a moment of gentle wit across a break that works elegantly to maintain the line-length insisted upon syntactically elsewhere in the poem. Other than in that middle line, the breaks seem primarily organizational, gathering large thoughts into sentences preserved as individual stanzas, and breaking those large thoughts in half at moments indicating subtle shifts in subject: the third stanza, for instance, is devoted to the physical description of Bobby the Poet, and separates the idea of Bobby's "preoccupied, tremulous seriousness" from the shorter characterizations grouped in the previous line.

THIS IS A clear-headed and efficient way of presenting ideas, but it cannot be said to have much of a felt impact on the aesthetic experience of reading the poem. Apart from the break after "artist," the lineation feels designed mainly to separate elements of the subject into segments of equal length; but given that the line breaks fall after punctuation in almost every case, the lineation does not even have a pronounced effect on the rhythm of our reading. And given that the poem's style so closely resembles Williams's prose style, and that it is actually somewhat ungainly in any form ("those strange years of hippiedom and 'people-power'"), one wonders why it was not written in prose to begin with, where it would at least not find Williams violating his own commandment that poets must "live in words, making a world from their music."

This complaint can be made about every long-lined poem in *Repair*. Even when Williams summons impressive language ("the nail which is the axis upon which turns the brutal human world upon the world"), and even when he writes about chaos, pain, or fear, his lineation is almost always the whisk broom of his consciousness, sweeping his thoughts into well-proportioned piles. From time to time he does experiment with other deployments; occasionally there are poems with far shorter and more frequently enjambed lines, whose enactment of spectacular violence in agitated verbs and adjectives recalls Ted Hughes, Geoffrey Hill, and the school of the Anglo-Saxon Awfuls:

> Furiously a crane
> in the scrapyard out of whose grasp
> a car it meant to pick up slipped,
> lifts and lets fall, lifts and lets fall
> the steel ton of its clenched pincers
> onto the shuddering carcass
> which spurts fragments of anguished
> glass
> until it's sufficiently crushed
> to be hauled up and flung onto
> the heap...

These lines (from "Shock") are virtuosic—but even here Williams covertly relies on clausal organizations (*onto* the shuddering carcass/ *which* spurts fragments.../ *until* it's sufficiently crushed) to spruce up the wreck.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN Williams weds his explicit, precise self-explorations to unadorned prose? In recent years he has tried the union twice, first in 1998 with the loftily titled and mostly unlofty book of essays *Poetry and Consciousness*, and now with his memoir. In some ways, *Misgivings* is Williams's most satisfying book. It is written in a form (short, tightly focused chapters, each dealing with a particular memory or observation) and about a subject (his parents, whom he calls "the conspiracy that made me who I am") to which his talents as a writer—even his talents as a poet—are perfectly matched. In his memoir, Williams plumbs few deep truths, but he emerges as one of the most authoritative psychologists (or pop-psychologists) in contemporary prose.

Many of the poems in *Repair* are also about Williams's parents; but the very sobering *Misgivings* seems to undo the argument of many of those poems. The most commonly sounded theme of the poems is that love, however painfully, heals psychological wounds; but in the memoir, love inflicts more psychological damage than it mends, and the emphasis is squarely off the mending—characters barely have time to forgive one another before they die.

The précis is simple: Williams's father, an egocentric businessman, hardens with time and loses touch emotionally with his wife, a long-suffering, narcissistic housewife, and poet son, leading to complication and to confrontation documented in

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plentiful detail. Williams's method is to sketch scenes based on memories of his parents, both now deceased, and then to question them sharply. The resulting forays into the interrogative mode sometimes become overlong, query piled upon query with towering abandon:

> My father's oath never to say he was sorry: what does it mean when you decide you'll never again, to anyone, even to your wife, even to any of your children, apologize, about anything? Is it an ethical decision? Something that comes out of a long consideration of moral necessities and imponderables? Is it the logical conclusion of one's vision of a cosmos which includes self, beyond-self, other selves, and a God, or some semblance of a God? And how does one arrive at a conclusion so coherent and compelling that anything else seems a positive affront to your belief system?
>
> Or is making such a decision, a resolution of such inclusiveness, more of a psychological realization? The perception that when one wounds or offends someone else, there's already pain in having to admit that you have, and an apology would only add to the total quotient of misery between offender and offended?
>
> Or does it have something to do with the sense of one's self-making, with coming to believe that self-creation isn't a continuing, indeterminate process, but that it has an end, comes to fruition and stops; that one can, must say, "I'm finished, the identity I have evolved is no longer open to negotiation, change is no longer an option"?

NO, NO, NO, no, yes, arrogantly, and no, the reader thinks; but Williams never offers an answer, preferring instead to explore nuance through the sheer accumulation of perplexity. This threatens to become tedious, and by the end of the book, it does; even if the sifting ambiguities are a welcome change from the overexplanatory poetry, we eventually want a resolution.

As the book progresses, however, Williams creates an increasingly vivid portrait of both parents, who become fully realized and plausible human beings; and it is impossible to deny that, in this way he handsomely fulfills the mandate of descriptive memoir. When he leaves his questioning behind and focuses on narrative recollection, Williams often finds little diamonds, brighter and more instantly right than the little discourses in the poetry: "When I picture my father on my horse, inelegant and graceless, it comes to me to think of him in a car as well, because there he was another person entirely." This goes on:

> My father is wearing a suit and the business hat he still sported in those days, and he drives with a deft, athletic, unselfconscious ease. As he does, he peels an orange—his breakfast—manipulating the steering wheel with the delicate pressure against it of one slightly raised knee; the fingers of his right hand curve and without him looking at the fruit his nails insert themselves into the skin at precisely the most efficacious point for it to be cleanly stripped, then he throws out the peels and segments the orange, one section at a time going neatly into his mouth.

Passages such as this are lovely to read, and they are even helpful in life; and when Williams writes, just a few sentences later, that his father's failing vision made him a nervous and accident-prone driver in his old age, the effect is chilling. Let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come.

IT IS A small luxury to watch a writer construct character as skillfully as Williams does at these moments, and the narrative is sometimes very moving. But it is weirdly static as well. The book is not a novel, and so it lacks a well-shaped plot. Williams has tried to circumvent this difficulty by flashing quickly between scenes, but once the characters are created, they do little that is exceedingly interesting to watch. So the pleasures of the memoir are mainly incidental pleasures, taken from brief moments of life made visible, such as the description of the father eating the orange. In this way, oddly enough, the pleasures of Williams's prose are poetic pleasures. Just as Williams's poems often tailspin into the prosaic, his writing comes to life poetically when it stretches out in the (comparative) aesthetic relaxation of prose.

This is interesting, because aesthetics is precisely what seems to be at stake in a great deal of Williams's writing, or rather a sort of uneasy truce with the idea of aesthetics that Williams feels continually tempted to break. Especially when it comes to his poetry, something in Williams's mind seems to distrust the idea that what he says should be judged by how he says it; that expressive quality, rhetorical power, formal ability, metaphorical aptitude, and linguistic artfulness might be called upon to establish his themes or be seen as primary to his subjects. His poems often seem determined to test the limits of aesthetic duty, as though Williams wants to see just how un-aesthetic poetry can become and still be poetry. The result is his tendency toward clear, discursive language and heavy explanation. It may be impossible, he seems to be saying, to write a poem about lovers that does not become a metaphor for love; but at least I can explicitly unmask the hidden term of the metaphor, and leave no doubt as to what I mean. In the end, this is an artist who deeply mistrusts art.

THE PROBLEM THAT haunts this verse is that aesthetic complexity may be the first (and even the only) absolute requirement of successful poetry. Largely because of the pressure exerted upon language by the inescapable sectionalizing of the line break, it is impossible for a poem to be successful unless it is first aesthetically successful, no matter how smart, important, or personal its ideas and themes. Kant could not have been a poet; and there are great poets who have produced poems with very little to say. At some level, Williams seems to know this: his preoccupation with poetic metaphor is a concession to aesthetics not found in the prose. Yet the poems chafe against it; they ask to be admired for the seriousness of their content rather than for the achievements of their structure and their diction.

Williams is a trenchant observer and a dedicated examiner of mind and motive. But those qualities are not, by themselves, sufficient to the requirements of poetry. This may be why his memoir seems so much more actualized than his verse. The form of memoir is aesthetic only at second-hand; its art is merely the blush of the historical. Here, instead of resisting the generalizing aesthetic essence of his form, Williams is free to give the particular truth the weight that the particular truth always seems to warrant in his mind. Instead of balancing art with exegesis, and burdening painted ornament with skeletal organization, he is free to give full rein to his analytical abilities, employing art at his discretion to enliven and to illustrate his argument, and to keep his readers reading.

At one moment in his memoir, Williams writes that

> I'm writing of my parents as though they were emblematic of something, as though there were some aura of meaning about them that transcended the small stories—and I realize they are small stories—that contain them.

This simple, frank, admission is one of the saving graces of Williams's book. There are moments, and registers of speech, for which poetry is unnecessary. Sometimes just being honest is enough. ■

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NEW YORK DIARIST

They Are The World

WITH 150 WORLD LEADers in town for the U.N. Millennium Summit—clogging traffic and renting out every restaurant on the East Side—the city is even louder and crankier than usual this week. Still, over at the New York Hilton and Towers, $5,000 will buy you tranquillity—a seat at the World Table, where you can discuss, well, the world. In the shadow of the U.N. summit, 2,000 international business leaders, heads of state, and (presumably the wealthiest among the) World Trade Organization protesters are participating, from September 4 through 10, in a "State of the World Forum." The forum's purpose? To foster dialogue and understanding between globalism's proponents and opponents, perpetrators and victims.

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV IS HERE, OF course, which makes sense when you consider that *(a)* he has nothing else to do and *(b)* whatever he does, Russians sure as hell don't want him to do it at home. George Soros and Colin Powell will speak, as will several leaders fearlessly guiding their nations into the twenty-first century. Queen Noor, I gather, will discuss her personal response to globalization: monarchy. South African President Thabo Mbeki will explain his scientific illiteracy.

BUT THE STATE OF THE WORLD FORUM isn't content with just the usual suspects. Stephen Covey (you may remember him from *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*) and Deepak Chopra (you may remember him from your last astral projection) will also hold court. And, on the forum's fifth night, tai chi master Chung Liang Al Huang and concert pianist Lorin Hollander will present what's being billed as "The Tao of Bach: A Concert for Global Harmony." The forum has taken a firm stand in favor of global harmony. It may also endorse "diversity," "tolerance," and "peace."

IF THE SPEAKERS' LIST SOUNDS LIKE the beginning of a good joke ("Mikhail Gorbachev, Deepak Chopra, and Colin Powell walk into a bar...."), the pamphlets on display beside the registration desk only add to the general mishmash. In one concentrated area you can find a magazine published by the Child Art Foundation, a glossy brochure selling conferences in Nepal, an EarthAction pamphlet on global warming featuring Leonardo DiCaprio, a booklet called "Finding God," a handout on solar-powered computers in Africa, and a promo for Three Dog Night's Jimmy Greenspoon and his "rock and roll lifestyle tell-all book."

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE FORUM'S opening night is not the blessing offered by Apela Colorado of the Iroquois Nation. Nor is it Gorbachev's call for the creation of a People's Assembly of Citizens (bet Jesse Helms is thrilled about that one). Even Queen Noor's speech about a "shrinking world" that expands our divisions is greeted only with sporadic applause. No, the evening's real high point comes when the forum participants break for a lavish "gala" dinner. Alas, the reporters in attendance, seated in the balcony above the Hilton Grand Ballroom, can only watch. Hungry journalists wait in vain for a world leader to throw up a radish. Perhaps the theory is that we cannot write about hunger and marginalization without being starved and marginalized. Reporters leave.

THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS SAY the real back-and-forth between participants will occur the next morning. I arrive in time to hear a surly monologue from Public Citizen's Lori Wallach about how the WTO, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank had better "shrink or sink." Her comments are wholly disregarded by the subsequent panelist, Martin Palmer, from the U.K.'s Alliance for Religion and Conservation—a coalition of eleven religions (Buddhists to Zoroastrians) working to protect the environment. Palmer's comments are in turn entirely ignored by panelist Doug Roche, who warns us about nuclear proliferation. And so it goes. Panelists offer monologues on their issues. And, at the noon press conferences, organizers talk about "dialogue," "cross-fertilization," and something meant to be happening at the "interstices."

WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING AT THE interstices is that these groups are so diverse, and the world's problems so multifaceted, that efforts to abstract the discussion to common principles keep taking us back to either "peace and diversity" or diffuse New Age crap. Each day, the conference opens with a 7 a.m. "Morning Meditation." It is unclear how many of the executives from Young & Rubicam, Texaco, and General Motors who are attending the forum (evidently representing globalization's perpetrators) will be participating in these meditations.

ON TUESDAY AFTERNOON, SIGNS BEGIN to appear in the pressroom offering "meal tickets for Ballroom Events" for sale for $125 at the information booth. But by Tuesday evening's eagerly anticipated Stephen Covey presentation, free hot food is being made available to the handful of journalists still in the balcony. As a metaphor for responsible government, the forum has progressed rapidly along the Marx/Engels trajectory (from "no food" to "you may buy food" to "free food according to your needs"). Covey offers a perplexing exposition on leadership that nods to the big themes of the forum only in that it is both reductive and without structure. We are told that leaders "must align with their own value systems" and must "release empowerment" through "vision, discipline, and passion." Later, he connects all this to "modeling, pathfinding, aligning, and empowerment." He also shows three videos—two of which are of the "Deep Thoughts by Jack Handy" variety. Messages such as "Do you hear the unheard?" and "Leaders see the connections" appear on a screen as butterflies flap and suns set to twinkly piano music.

IN ORDER TO TRULY BECOME "ENrolled" (not my word) by a forum such as this, you need to believe either that discourse and dialogue suffice as ends in themselves or that they lead to the kind of power currently being monopolized by multinational corporations and world governments. The tulle and tissue of the conference is that simply communicating across these diverse groups will change the balance of power. But the State of the World Forum is quietly hedging its bets. As a colleague points out to me just before George Winston starts to play his harmonica on Tuesday night, State of the World, Inc., has kindly provided us with an "Executive Summary" among our materials. Included is the news that the forum is launching a new, for-profit enterprise that is intended to become "the premier consulting company for leaders of the 21st century ... and replicate the proven business models of... Bain & Co., Andersen Consulting, and McKinsey and Co." Until the brain trust at the forum figures out a better way to reconfigure world power, it has decided to get into the game the old-fashioned way. With money.

DAHLIA LITHWICK

DAHLIA LITHWICK is Supreme Court correspondent for *Slate.com*.

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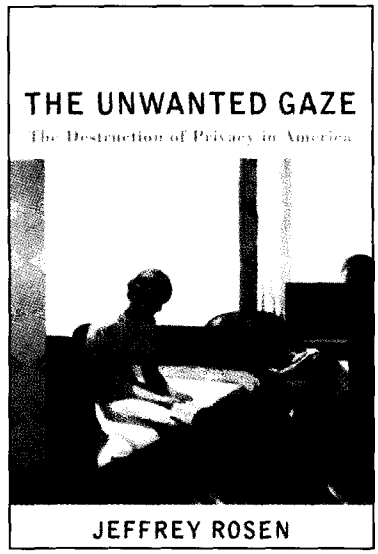
The Georgetown Law Journal

is pleased to present a review symposium on

Jeffrey Rosen's

The Unwanted Gaze: The Destruction of Privacy in America



Participants include: Anita Allen, Julie Cohen, Sanford Levinson, Lawrence Lessig, Robert Post, Jed Rubenfeld, Nadine Strossen, Peter Swire, Rosa Ehrenreich

Friday, September 15, 2000
The Georgetown University Law Center
600 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.
Panel Discussions, 10am-6pm, Room 206
Roundtable Discussion, 7:30pm, Room 200
For a complete schedule, see www.unwantedgaze.com

This symposium is made possible by generous grants from The Georgetown University Law Center and The Privacy Foundation, Denver, Colorado

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PRAISE FOR The Unwanted Gaze
Now in its Third Printing from Random House

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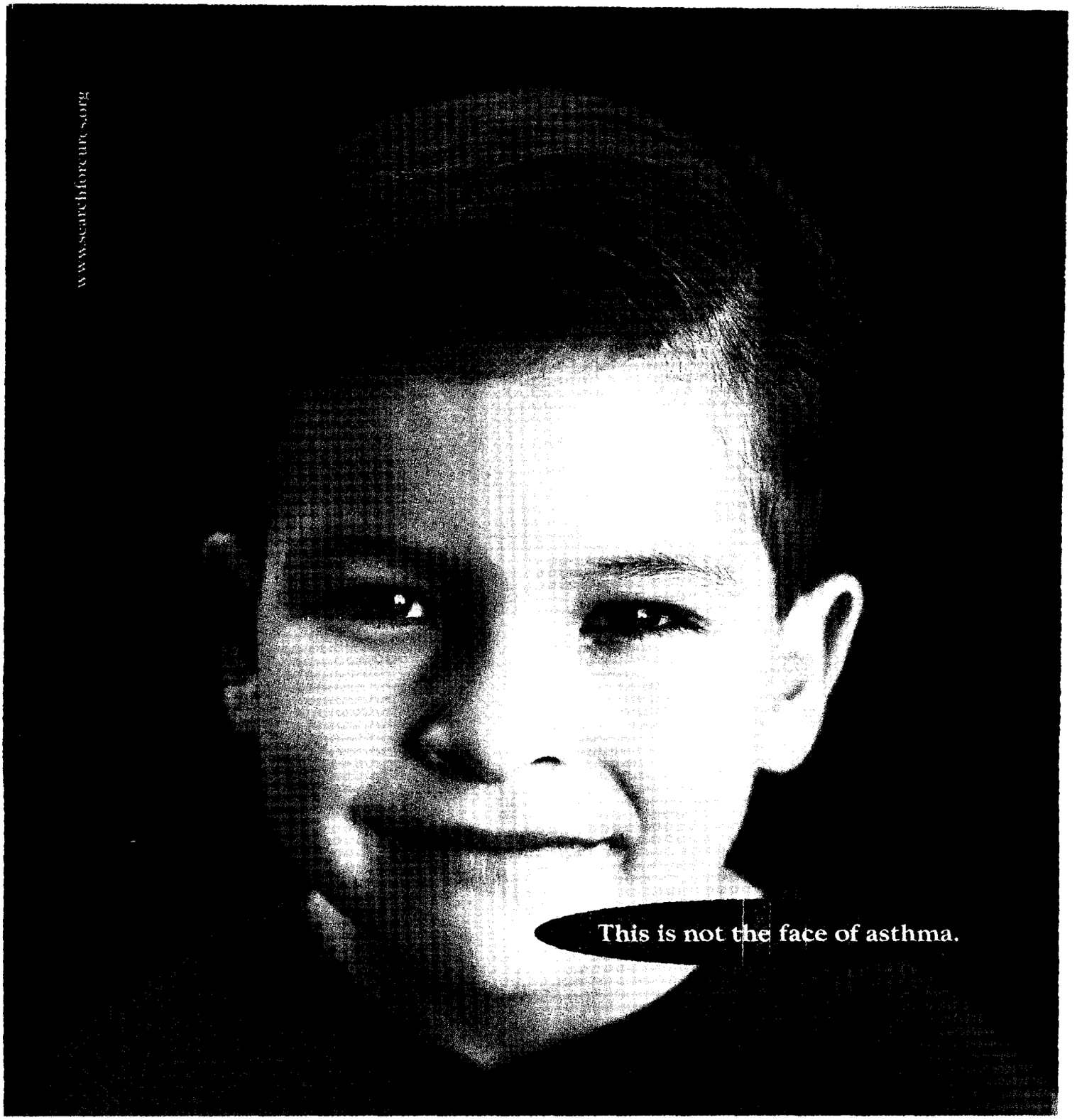

It's the face of Jeremy Gutierrez — skateboarder, bike rider, rollerblader, kid. It wasn't always that way. Like five million other children with asthma, Jeremy was forced to live an overly protected life due to fear of attacks. And when attacks did come, they often meant being rushed away from friends and family into the fear and trauma of the emergency room. Today, America's pharmaceutical companies are discovering medicines that help kids like Jeremy stay healthy, stay in school, and stay out of hospitals. Pharmaceutical company researchers are working hard to discover breakthroughs that will help make many illnesses and diseases a thing of the past and bring more patients new hope for a better tomorrow. Thanks to new medicines discovered by these researchers, today, Jeremy has a life like any normal six-year-old — a life full of curiosity, full of wonder and full of health.

America's Pharmaceutical Companies

Leading the way in the search for cures

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